

# *jeevadhara*

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## **Intoxicants in India: Past and Present Inter-Disciplinary Explorations**

Edited by:

**Felix Wilfred**

Malloossery P. O.,

Kottayam - 686 041

Kerala, India

Tel: (91) (481) 2392530, 2397017

Mob: 9495519775

E-mail: [jcmanalel@gmail.com](mailto:jcmanalel@gmail.com)

Web: [www.jeevadhara.org](http://www.jeevadhara.org)

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## Editorial

From tea-shop chit-chat to the pretentious rhetoric at political podia and electoral campaigns, prohibition has become a passionate public discourse in the country. These discourses generally fall into two main categories: *political or moral*. Prohibition has become a weapon in political struggles for power. For others, drinking has become synonymous with evil and moral debasement. Perceptive analysts will note that today we have reached a saturation point with the discourse on prohibition, and as a result, there is repetition of arguments and counter-arguments ad nauseam. If we want to come out of the dead-end we have reached, and move forward, the discourse needs to be widened by exploring other important dimensions of drinking and addiction to alcohol or to other intoxicants or substances. This is important both to frame social and public policies to address the issue from an enlightened and scientific perspective, as well as to devise strategies to help the victims of addiction to recovery.

With this need in mind, Asian Centre for Cross-Cultural Studies, Chennai organized in October 2016 a national conference on “Intoxicants: India’s Past and Present” inviting eminent scholars including medical practitioners, psychologists, anthropologists, historians, ethicists and others to make contributions for a deeper reflection on the issue of intoxicants. This led to the emergence of very illuminating perspectives, analyses and insights. The present number of *Jeevadhara* carries some select papers from this conference.

There are two important perspectives which this number of *Jeevadhara* presents in dealing with intoxicants. First, addiction to intoxicants is not something that could be defined in ethical terms and overcome through moral persuasion alone, but something that has to do with human biology and its conditioning. There is a biological



constraint in human brain which makes addiction a permanent illness and to keep it under control one needs to have a multipronged approach, including medical treatment. Second, if the familial and social environment could play a negative role in leading someone to addiction, the recovery from the same and rehabilitation requires the cooperation of the family and the community.

The issue opens with the contribution of Francis Xavier Nelson who tells us that hospital-based treatment of alcoholism is not effective in India, and may not reach out to the larger masses of the affected people. Instead, he speaks of the importance of community-based model for the treatment of addiction. Studies and researches show the importance and effectiveness of surrender to a superior power as the alcoholics struggle to get out of their situation. Sincere and frank sharing of experiences as it happens among Alcoholics Anonymous gives hope and strength to the victims of addiction; so too efforts to rebuild fractured human relationships with the family and the society.

D John and Godwin Prem Singh on the basis of their research show the incredible extent to which adolescents in our society are into addiction of alcohol and use of intoxicating substances, giving lie to the general impression that this was only a problem in the Western societies. No, it is very close to us; right in the midst of our adolescents in the country. The authors go deep into the analysis of forces and factors that trap the adolescent children in addiction and the damaging effects it has on them. The facts and analyses they present are very revealing and illuminating. They also highlight the importance of proper policies, preventive measures and educational strategies to help the adolescent victims. The article reinforces the importance of school and the community to help the adolescents out of the addiction situation.

In his contribution titled "A Study on Surrogate Alcohol Advertising in India", A. Stephen draws our attention to how the industry marketing alcohol and other intoxicating substances takes to surrogate advertising in order to circumvent the ban of advertisement on them. He analyzes the ingenious ways adopted by the market and media for this purpose which include also roping in celebrities from the world of cinema, sports, etc. The liquor lobby even tries to have its own media channels

to pursue surrogate advertisements. The Indian cinema also has changed from the depiction of heroes as morally upright teetotallers; it is no more strange or a rarity to find drinking heroes on the silver screens or on TV serials.

The next contribution by James Ponniah leads us to reflect on intoxicants from a cultural and anthropological perspective. He presents two case-studies. The first one relates to a tribe in Himalayas among whom the use of alcohol and intoxicants in ritual context has a deeper religious significance in that it serves as a means to bind together the community with its ancestors, and confers vitality to the group and its individuals. Alcohol consumption is connected with the worship of their deity and it has a role to play in healing the sick and in the divination of the shamans of the community. The second case is that of Malangs, a Muslim sect of Punjab among whom intoxicants help to reach an altered "mystical" state of consciousness with experiences out of the ordinary. The use of intoxicants among them is also a means of resistance to the stranglehold of Sharia, which according to them, binds people and constraints them from higher forms of experience.

The next contribution by Maria Arul Raja studies intoxicants from a Biblical point of view. The Biblical data gives us multi-layered perspectives on alcohol. Here we note on the one hand the abuse of intoxicants to the point of addiction and slavery is condemned for all its evil effects; on the other hand Bible is not against moderate use of alcohol in the context of celebration of communion, *agape* and building up of community. The use of alcohol will be guided by proper discernment and circumspection. In the second part of the essay, the author draws an interesting and very useful parallel between the twelve steps in the Alcohol Anonymous and the exhortations in the Biblical texts. These texts corroborate the twelve steps and can help the victims of alcoholism to free themselves from their addiction and slavery.

The final article by Arthur Jeyakumar is of great historical interest. He goes into a very little researched area of the mission history, namely how the missionaries addressed the issue of drinking among the people. The author depicts the background of the Protestant missionaries most of whom came from Western countries where temperance movement



was very active in the nineteenth century. Finding the problem of widespread drunkenness among the people they served, many missionaries organized local temperance societies. Their initiatives, though suspected initially as a means of conversion, in the course of time, found positive echo also among Indian nationalists who fought against alcoholism. Another response of the missionaries was to censure and challenge the colonial government which – not unlike the present-day situation – tried to increase its revenues through the sales of alcohol causing great harm to the individuals and to the society.

Each of the six contributions, as the readers will note, makes distinct contributions to understand the issue of intoxicants in its diverse dimensions. They deal also with the past and present of the intoxicants in the country. It is hoped that this number of *Jeevadhara* will enlighten and support all those who grapple with the issue of intoxicants today. In particular, it is hoped that the reflections and perspectives presented here will help move beyond bipolar division of prohibition and non-prohibition and study the issue of intoxicants in a much broader light.

I thank the six authors for their very valuable and timely contributions. After the presentation of their papers at the above mentioned conference, they took time to work further and shape their articles. Ms Nirmal rendered immense contribution by assisting me in organizing the conference at Asian Centre for Cross-Cultural Studies. Even more was her assistance in editing the selected six papers for publication in this special number of *Jeevadhara*. I wish to express to her my deep appreciation and gratitude for her singular dedication and her expert assistance in editing.

**Felix Wilfred**

Asian Centre for Cross-Cultural Studies  
Chennai

# Community-Camp Approach for Alcoholism Treatment in India

**Francis Xavier Nelson**

For years, there has been a worldwide concern over the effectiveness of treatment for alcoholism. In India, most of the alcoholism treatment centers are located in the major hospitals in the urban areas. Stigma attached to psychiatry discourages alcoholics from seeking admission in hospitals. Additionally, hospital-based treatment is expensive and away from communities. Conventional interventions used in the past to address alcoholism are inadequate. Alcoholism was not then known as a chronic incurable brain disease. This crucial realization of the complex disease calls for multifaceted approach. The community-camp approach provides the solution for successful recovery cum sobriety retention. The author of this contribution, Dr Francis Xavier Nelson, is Director, Counselling Ministry, Diocese of Kottar.

Alcohol abuse is in existence in most of the societies over the world since the time immemorial. However, the problem has become more complex and alarming in the recent years. India has more than 80 million alcohol abusers<sup>1</sup>. India ranks third in terms of largest alcohol market across the globe<sup>2</sup>. The average age of drinking came down from 28yrs in 1980 to 17yrs in 2007 to 12yrs in 2016. Globalization, poor awareness of the hazards, change in culture, increased availability etc lead to a high level of alcoholism in India<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Vivek Benegal, Ajay Velayudhan, Sanjeev Jain, "Social cost of alcoholism: A Karnataka perspective", in *NIMHANS Journal*, 18(1&2), (2000): 67.

<sup>2</sup> Vivek Benegal, (2005) India: Alcohol and public health. *Addiction*, 100(8), 1051-1056

<sup>3</sup> A. Anandhasayanam, S. Kannan, N. Kumar, S. Kumar, M. Tyagi, To assess the change in "Quality of care leading to change in outcome" when a



Alcohol is the most commonly used drug in India, thriving in silence and in shadows, is more devastating upon the individual and society than any other drug<sup>4</sup> worked out 16 criteria of harm which are wrought by this drug in an individual, family, and community. He concluded that alcohol was the most harmful drug with the score 72, with heroin 55 and crack cocaine 54 in second and third places. Given this, no wonder in an ascetic mode, Mahatma Gandhi envisioned a liquor free India. He advocated legal prohibition taking into account individual, family and social cost of alcoholism.

### **Alcohol and Alcoholism**

The problem with alcoholism is not in the bottle; not in the glass; but it is in the brain. The Tamil sage Thiruvalluvar's Thirukural says that to wean away a drinker is as impossible as taking a lit lamp underwater in search of a drowned man. Let me explain six basic terms for a proper understanding of alcohol and alcoholism.

#### **1. What is alcohol?**

Alcohol is a product resulting from the fermentation of yeast, sugars, and starches.

#### **2. What is alcohol use?**

Alcohol use means alcohol is used for a purpose other than getting intoxicated.

#### **3. What is alcohol misuse?**

Alcohol misuse means drinking for the purpose of getting intoxicated.

#### **4. What is alcohol abuse?**

Alcohol abuse is a pattern of drinking that results in harm to the drinker and others close to him/her physically, psychologically,

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pharmacist joins the conventional alcohol de-addiction treatment team in a residential de-addiction centre at Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences*, 2(4), (2013): 7-18.

<sup>4</sup> David Nutt, Leslie A King, William Saulsbury, Colin Blakemore, "Development of a rational scale to assess the harm of drugs of potential misuse", in *Lancet: A Journal of British and Foreign Medicine*, 369(9566), (2007): 1047-1053.



economically and socially. When a person abuses alcohol, the sole purpose is to get intoxicated.

### 5. *What is alcohol heavy use?*

Heavy drinking, which is often called “at risk” drinking, refers to alcohol consumption that exceeds the recommended daily limits.

### 6. *What is alcohol dependence or alcoholism?*

Alcohol dependence or alcoholism is a chronic disease that results when an individual becomes physically as well as psychologically addicted to alcohol.

## Critical Review of Earlier Models

From the research literature available, there were numerous models of approach in practice for drinking alcohol and addicted to alcohol (alcoholism) historically. Only 5 major explanatory models that made significant impacts are dealt with here.

### 1. *Moral Model*

Weakness and character defects are the result of addiction. This model had no sympathy for people with chronic disease of alcoholism. Society viewed drunkenness as a moral flaw and sin. Victorian era treatments were often inhumane. Popular “treatments” involved imprisonment and sentencing to asylums, which were not therapeutic.

### 2. *Temperance Model*

Alcohol is addictive and destructive; abstinence is the only salvation. An individual’s will is diseased and lacks control. In 1805, Benjamin Rush, a physician and humanitarian, wrote an essay titled “The Effects of Ardent Spirits upon Man.” The *mantra* was to “Taste not, handle not, and touch not.” This model pitied, instead of empathizing with the addicts. Consequently, it labeled the drinker as “Drunkard.”

### 3. *Medical Model*

Medically alcoholism is considered a physical disease which requires treatment by a physician. Alcoholism may be conceptualized as “the last stage in a continuum of drinking that extends from social drinking

to heavy drinking to problem drinking to alcoholism”<sup>5</sup>. Unfortunately, this model falls short to deal with the complexity of Alcoholism.

#### 4. *Characterological Model*

This theory denotes that addiction is a character defect and learned behavior. An abnormal personality trait causes a person to become alcohol dependent. The psychological defects predispose an individual to addictive personality traits such as poor impulse control, ineffective coping mechanism, being manipulative and feeling perplexed and powerless.

#### 5. *Socio-cultural Model*

It works on the assumption that alcoholics require change of social environment for recovery. Changing the environment may create a whole new culture, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors for the alcoholic.

Experience shows that none of the above described five models is able to come to terms with the complexity and intricacies of alcoholism. They also fail to provide a humane treatment to alcoholics and their family members.

### **Fresh Understanding of Alcoholism**

Alcoholism was for the first time defined as a ‘disease’ by the American Medical Association in 1956. Contemporary American scientists like Nora Volkow, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and Mark Willenbring of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism state that the craving that an alcoholic feels for alcohol can be as strong as the need for food or water. An alcoholic will continue to drink despite serious health, family, or legal problems.<sup>6</sup>

*“Trapped in a black hole,  
Desperately trying to crush my soul,  
My body is weak, my mind weaker,  
As the hole encompasses me, I fall deeper*

<sup>5</sup> J. Solomon, *Alcoholism and clinical psychiatry* (New York: Springer, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> D. W. Pfaff, D. N. Volkow, *Neuroscience in the 21st century: From basic to clinical* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 2016).



*It's not my fault, I am not to blame,  
For all this grief, pain and shame.*" - Rahul, recovering alcoholic.<sup>7</sup>

## 1. Brain Disease

High-tech scanning has resulted in new understanding that long-term drinking can shrink the frontal lobes of the brain, which impairs thinking skills. A recent study at Rutgers University<sup>8</sup> indicates that heavy drinking, a risky behavior, can decrease the adult brain cells by as much as 40 percent. Alcohol interferes with normal neurological pathways that are responsible for transmitting signals in the brain that involves the neurotransmitter dopamine. This dopamine pathway in the brain controls euphoria and pain. When brain cells are repeatedly exposed to alcohol, levels of dopamine and other neurotransmitters create a chemical imbalance. As a result, neurological pathways demand alcohol and thus the abuser gets addicted.

## 2. Incurable Disease

Animal studies explain that the rats and monkeys normally stay away from anything that is alcohol, but after injecting a minute quantity of TIQ (Tetrahydroisoquinoline) into their brain, these animals quickly develop a craving for alcohol; they exhibit, a preference for alcohol to water. Studies show that injected TIQ stays in the brain even if they are off alcohol.

TIQ, the biochemical culprit, was discovered in the brains of alcoholics in Houston, Texas, by a scientist named Virginia Davis<sup>9</sup>. For a normal drinker, nature helps to get rid of acetaldehyde during alcohol metabolic process. The acetaldehyde is promptly processed into carbon dioxide and water which are eliminated through kidneys and lungs. But for

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<sup>7</sup> V. Visvanathan, "TTK Hospital: A centre of hope", *Frontline*, 16(18), August 28 to September 10, 1999.

<sup>8</sup> M. L. Anderson, M. S. Nokia, K. P. Govindaraju, T. J. Shors, "Moderate drinking? Alcohol consumption significantly decreases neurogenesis in the adult hippocampus", in *Neuroscience*, (2012): 224, 202–209.

<sup>9</sup> K. Blum, J. E. Payne, *Alcohol and the addictive brain* (New York: The Free Press, 1991).

alcoholic drinkers, a very small amount of poisonous acetaldehyde goes to the brain; and through a very complicated biochemical process, it winds up as TIQ. With the loss of control it becomes chronic and incurable.

### 3. *Emotional Disease*

In addition to the above-mentioned chemical process, an alcoholic's emotional life is in chaos. Externally, the person appears to be a huckster with no sense of morality and no desire to take responsibility for his/her words or actions. Internally, this person is consumed by pain, anxiety, guilt, shame, anger, a feeling of incompetence, and fear. As alcohol depresses the central nervous system, alcoholics experience insomnia, paranoia and hallucinations. In addition, they tend to manifest depression, anxiety, aggression, compulsive behaviors and denial.

### 4. *Family Disease*

Alcoholism is a family disease that pushes the family to the breaking point, impacts the home stability, the family unity, mental health, physical health, finances, and above all family dynamics. The spouse may have feelings of hatred, self-pity, avoidance of social contacts; may suffer exhaustion and become physically or mentally ill<sup>10</sup>. Parental alcoholism also has severe effects on normal children. Many of these children have common symptoms such as low self-esteem, loneliness, guilt, feelings of helplessness, fears of abandonment, and chronic depression<sup>11</sup>. Alcohol affects each member of the family from the unborn to the old.

### 5. *Community Disease*

The social repercussions of alcoholism are far reaching and often tragic. The damaging effects are not limited to the person who drinks or to those closest to him. The impact extends into the community, schools, the workplace, the healthcare system and into society as a whole. Drinking leads to many social ills including abuse and violence against relatives, neighbors and acquaintances. It contributes to a range

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<sup>10</sup> G. Berger, *Alcoholism and the family* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1993).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 1993



of medical conditions, including malignant cancers, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus, gastro intestinal diseases, neuropsychiatric disorders, unintentional injury and intentional injury.

If all the above areas are not taken into consideration, the treatment may not be a 'good fit' for the alcoholics and co-alcoholics. To come to terms with the manifold issues of alcoholism, I feel that the community camp approach would be a 'perfect fit' clinically.

### **Evidence Based Community Camp Model**

The benefits of a community camp approach over the hospital settings cannot be over emphasized<sup>12</sup>. It is cost effective, as it is based on community and community participation. Moreover, it is less stigmatizing and the patient can stay with his family during the treatment<sup>13</sup>. The family cum community intervention is the most notable current advancement in the area of bio-psycho-socio-spiritual treatment of alcoholism<sup>14</sup>. In India, from early 1980s, voluntary and government agencies have addressed health issues by organizing 'camps' - eye camps, immunization camps, family planning camps etc<sup>15</sup>. The success of these camps prompted Indian health professionals to adopt the 'camp approach' for the treatment of alcoholism as well<sup>16</sup>.

In 1970s the camp approach for opium treatment was successfully organized at Jodhpur in Rajasthan<sup>17</sup>. 3387 patients were treated at 77

<sup>12</sup> W. Wang, "Illegal drug abuse and the community camp strategy in China.", in *Journal of Drug Education*, 29 (1999): 97-114

<sup>13</sup> S. Datta, B. J. Prasantham, K. Kuruvilla, "Community treatment of alcoholism", in *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 33 (1991): 305-306.

<sup>14</sup> G. du Plessis, "Toward and integrated model of addiction", in *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*, 7(3), (2012): 1-24.

<sup>15</sup> S. Ranganathan, "The Manjakkudi experience: A camp approach towards treating alcoholics", *Addiction*, 89(9), (1994): 1071-1075.

<sup>16</sup> A. Sidana, A.B.S. Chavan, R. Garg, J. Singh, "Long term outcome of substance abuse treatment through integrated camp approach", in *Indian Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 30(3-4), (2014): 94-101.

<sup>17</sup> D.R. Purohit, V. K. Razdan, "Evaluation and appraisal of community camp approach to opium detoxification in North India", *Indian Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 4, (1988): 15-21.

camps between 1979 and 1986. The dropout rate during these camps was 5.6% while abstinence at follow-up after 2-4 years was about 60-70%<sup>18</sup>. Similarly, four alcoholism treatment camps were organized in Manjakkudi, Tamil Nadu from 1989-1993 and in these camps 105 patients were treated and found successful with an 82% abstinence rate at 1 year follow up<sup>19</sup>. This model is being predominantly followed in many states in India including Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan, and Andhra Pradesh and so on. In Tamil Nadu itself, this treatment approach is currently followed but not limited to Chennai, Chengalpattu, Coimbatore, Erode, Gingee, Kallikulam, Kuppainallur, Madurai, Nagercoil, Okkur, Puliya, Rameshwaram, Thanjavur, Tirunelveli, Tholayavattam, Trichy, Valliyoor, Vellore, Wellington and so on.

The heart of the camp approach is the readily available social support network. The community support includes friends, relatives, coworkers, neighbors and others<sup>20</sup>. The recovering alcoholic is able to experience community cooperation in terms of progressing in sobriety and preventing a relapse<sup>21</sup>.

## Some Highlights of Community Camp Approach

### 1. *Surrendering to the Higher Power*

The meaning behind the Latin phrase “spiritus contra Spiritum” is that alcohol (spirit) counters higher power (Spirit). The word ‘spiritus’ means both ‘alcohol’ and ‘higher power,’ while ‘contra’ means ‘against.’ According to psychologist Carl Jung, one of his chronically relapsing alcoholic patients, Rowland Hazard, who reached beyond the reach of

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<sup>18</sup> D. R. Purohit, B. R. Vyas, “Opium addiction treatment camp: A follow-up study”, in *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 6, (1982): 55-61.

<sup>19</sup> Ranganathan, S., *op.cit.*, (1994): 1071-1075.

<sup>20</sup> B. S. Chavan, N. Gupta, “A community-based treatment for substance dependence”, in *American Journal of Addiction*, 13, (2004): 324-325.

<sup>21</sup> B. S. Chavan, N. Gupta, L. Raj, P. Arun, and Chandrabala, “Camp approach- an effective, alternate inpatient treatment setting for substance dependence: A report from India”, *German Journal of Psychiatry*, 6, (2003): 17-22.



medicine, was able to stay permanently sober after having a life-changing "experience of higher power"<sup>22</sup>. Carl Jung confirmed to Bill Wilson, another uncontrollable drinker, that a powerless alcoholic has to surrender to higher power as the first step to recover from this powerful alcoholism. It means one has to find a power greater than powerful alcoholism to remain free from the clutches of this brain disease. Indeed, a power greater than alcoholism/alcoholic will restore him/her to sanity<sup>23</sup>.

In the community camp, the first step is to surrender to higher power and to realize the powerlessness over alcohol in order to sober up from alcoholism. Although the alcoholics reported that they had lost faith in God during their drinking period, they value higher power again as number one force for their recovery. Hence, it is realized in the camp that the powerful brain disease can be handled with the help of all powerful higher power.

## 2. *Healing by Sharing Openly in AA Fellowship*

In the summer of 1935, Bill Wilson, a stockbroker, and Dr. Bob Smith, a surgeon, both formerly hopeless alcoholics, shared their "experience, strength, and hope" with each other in Dr. Smith's living room. Initially they agreed to meet each other for only 15 minutes, but their meeting lasted for more than 4 hours. They both never took another drink after June 10, 1935. That "dry date" is officially counted as the start of Alcoholics Anonymous<sup>24</sup>. Formerly hopeless alcoholics speak with each other about "what it was like, what happened, and what it is like now." It is a healing by talking openly with another suffering alcoholic<sup>25</sup>. AA fellowship prescribes 12 simple steps programme to safely and easily recover from alcoholism.

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<sup>22</sup> B. Wilson, *Alcoholics Anonymous* (New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, 1939).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> G. E. Vaillant, "What can long-term follow-up teach us about relapse and prevention of relapse in addiction?", in *British Journal of Addiction*, 83, (1988): 1147-1157.

In the community camp, daily lectures are given on issues related to alcoholism: on the disease concept, the need for total abstinence, required lifestyle changes, ways to stay away from alcohol, or on the serious damages that alcohol can cause. The sober alcoholics from previous camps come to share their experiences and strengthen the inmates of the camp who initially appear to be hopeless, worthless and helpless. This instills hope for a new beginning in them. They willingly follow the 12 recovery steps one by one and make progress in recovery. Hence, the disease may be **incurable but it is treatable** by the AA fellowship.

### *3. Reaching out to the Sponsor for Emotional Support*

A sponsor is a sober alcoholic who has made significant progress in dealing with problems, difficulties, obstacles and crises in the recovery program. He/she shares personal recovery experiences with another alcoholic who is attempting to attain or maintain emotional sobriety through A.A. In some ways, a sponsor is like a good friend, a wise teacher, a seasoned mentor, an experienced guide and an unconditional counselor. Together, they work the program of recovery and keep one another on track.

In the community camp, inputs on emotions are given to help the clients identify the issues present in their personal life. Sponsors make sure to focus on emotional balance, total abstinence and help avoiding high-risk feelings such as being hungry, angry, lonely and tired. They follow up their clients. In turn, clients show willingness to talk and to listen to their sponsors about their personal issues and struggles honestly. Thus they are able to deal with the emotional disease by accepting the alternatives given, and implementing them in their daily lives.

### *4. Reconciling with the Family for Nurturing Care*

Many alcoholics have extensive marital and family problems, and hence positive marital and family adjustment is associated with better outcome. The most important aspect of family reconciliation after alcoholism treatment is healing the family's relationship. Honesty, humility, and forgiveness are essential in their conversations, as the ultimate goal is reconciliation. Families can consider having these conversations with a trained alcoholism family counselor who can



mediate the discussion and keep each person focused on the goals of family harmony restoration. Mending the relationships between family members that were damaged because of alcoholism can be challenging, but ultimately worthwhile.

In the community camp, family intervention therapy significantly improves the motivation to stop alcohol and changes the locus of control from external to internal. These families express greater satisfaction in family functioning, such as free and open communication, mutual warmth and support, becoming ideal role models, evincing good leadership, cohesiveness and sharing of responsibilities. Changing the locus of control from external to internal brings about a positive change in the motivational status of alcohol dependents.

### ***5. Rebuilding Relationships in the Community for Empowering Solidarity***

New life does not emerge overnight. It may take some time to regain trust from people who are hurt. Not everyone will be ready to forgive and forget. Just giving up the alcohol alone may not be enough to repair the damage and to rebuild relationships. The best way to do this is by staying sober and building a good life in recovery by one day at a time. Finally, letting go of the past is absolutely a *sine qua non* condition for serene recovery from alcohol addiction.

### **Conclusion**

Alcoholism is a cunning, baffling and powerful brain disease<sup>26</sup>. World literature tells that professional medicine can do little to halt alcoholism for lifetime<sup>27</sup>. At this dismal juncture, AA and its 12 steps come into existence as this century's greatest invention, bringing the message of hope to the hopeless alcoholics. Thousands of suffering alcoholics and struggling families, once branded as 'curse' are now joyously accepted as 'blessing'. In fact, the community camp model is grounded on AA's 12 steps. Here, good clinical outcomes are significantly correlated with

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<sup>26</sup> *Op.cit.*, Wilson, 1939

<sup>27</sup> G. E. Vaillant, "Alcoholics Anonymous: Cult or cure?", in *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 39, (2005): 431–436.

surrendering to the higher power, healing by sharing in Alcoholics Anonymous fellowship and reaching out to the sponsor, reconciling with the family and rebuilding relationships in the community. All these five factors are essential elements of the community camps regularly conducted in India especially in Tamil Nadu, the southernmost part of it. Just freely without any expense, one can recover from this incurable disease. Indeed, it is amazing to know the open mystery of alcoholism as incurable but treatable and recoverable for a life of sobriety.

# **Substance Abuse among Adolescent Children Today Implications and Interventions**

**D. John and J. Godwin Prem Singh**

Substance abuse is fast spreading among adolescents and is becoming a major concern in India. The current assessment of substance-related harms and their social costs is poor. Parental alcoholism, peer pressure, easy availability, the many stressors of adolescence, poverty, and lack of preventive measures - these are the major causes. The effects include physical, psychological and character disorders, besides academic and social problems. Adequate data, proper alcohol or drug policies, effective preventive strategies, and awareness education are the need of the hour. Early intervention is a necessity, the absence of which can lead to severe consequences. For adolescents, most interventions can bear fruit at the school and community level. D. John is a Ph.D. Research Scholar, Bishop Heber College (Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli; Dr J. Godwin Prem Singh is Associate Professor in the same College.

## **Introduction**

The problem of substance abuse is fast assuming alarming proportions and is becoming a major health concern in India. Addictions that begin in adolescence often extend well in to adulthood and it becomes hard for the person to quit. Adolescents of today are becoming easy victims due to growing parental alcoholism in the country, easy availability of a variety of addictive substances, peer pressure which is typical of adolescence, and other stressors of this developmental stage. Lower economic groups, street and working adolescents, school drop-outs and those living away from home for various purposes including the migrant adolescents seem to be the most vulnerable groups. These children are marked by use of multiple substances, dependence on the drugs they use, neglect of studies, aggressive and attention seeking behaviour, conduct disorder, impulsiveness, delinquency, low self-esteem,



and at times schizophrenia spectrum disorders. Treatment is a very long process, and the success rate is rather poor. Instead, preventive strategies are the need of the hour. This article is based on the personal experience of the authors in this field and on the findings of some selected studies and researches in the area. It is a modest attempt to highlight the various issues surrounding the substance abusing adolescent children.

### Parental Addiction and Adolescents

In India, the intake of alcohol has been shooting up in the past two decades. The Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently published a report examining the economic and health implications of alcoholic use among its 34 member and a few non-member countries. Among a list of 40 nations, India stood third. Countries that closely followed India were China, Israel and Brazil.<sup>1</sup> A high proportion of alcoholic adults in a country means a high proportion of children exposed to drinks close at hand. Globally the percentage of under-15 boys who have not had alcohol went down from 44% to 30%, while for girls it decreased from 50% to 31% in the 2000s. The trend of heavy drinking witnessed among the young of all countries has experts worried. "It can be dangerous and have long-term effects such as habit formation or other chronic conditions," said herpetologist Dr Aabha Nagral, who consults with Jaslok Hospital.<sup>2</sup> It is also said that in India more than 50% of the drinking population are young people within 25 years of age.<sup>3</sup> This could be easily the case because of the fact that children in an alcoholic family faced four to ten times more the risk of taking to drinks earlier than their counterparts.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sumitra Deb Roy, "Indians drinking alcohol up 55% in 20 years (2015)", <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Indians-drinking-alcohol-up-55-in-20-years/articleshow/47313965.cms>. Retrieved on 01-12-2016

<sup>2</sup> Roy, loc. cit.,

<sup>3</sup> L.D. Sahayam, R Gayathri, Arockia Mary, *Arinthathum Ariyathathum* (Tiruchy: TWF & TASOSS Pub., 2014): 11.

<sup>4</sup> Linda A Bennett, Steven J Wolin, and David Reiss, "Cognitive, behavioral, and emotional problems among school-age children of alcoholic parents", in *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 145(2), (1988):185-190

Half the drinking population in India are themselves children of alcoholic parents.<sup>5</sup> In 2008, the premier institution of All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi carried out a study on the association between parental and off springs alcohol use. The study collected information on all family members above the age of 10 years in a household in the state of Kerala. It confirmed the association between alcohol use by father and their male offspring.<sup>6</sup>

## Implications

According to the American National Association of Children of Alcoholics (NACOA), the Children Of Alcoholics (COAs) are the true victims of parental addiction.<sup>7</sup> According to Ackerman, the primary patient in an alcoholic family is the child and not the alcoholic parent.<sup>8</sup> These children fall into faulty coping mechanisms and assume roles that often make them land up in addiction.<sup>9</sup> To prevent these children from addiction, their families need to be addressed. We need to offer treatment possibilities for the alcoholic parent and social support for the other members of the family. The COAs need other role models to form new primary relationships in life. Responsible parenting has to be taught to the parents, particularly, to the newlyweds.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Gururaj G, Pratima Murthy, Grish N and Benegal V., *Alcohol Related Harm: Implications for Public Health and Policy in India*, Publication No. 73, (Bangalore: NIMHANS, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Anita Chopra, A. Dhawan, H. Sethi, and D. Mohan, "Association between parental and offspring's alcohol use – population data from India", in *Journal of Indian Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health* 4(2), (2008):38-43

<sup>7</sup> This is the theme posted on the home page of NACOA, a national and autonomous organization committed to the cause of COAs. Visit: [www.nacoa.org/aboutnacoa.htm](http://www.nacoa.org/aboutnacoa.htm). Retrieved on 31-03-2016

<sup>8</sup> Robert J. Ackerman, *Children of Alcoholics: A Guidebook for Educators, Therapists, and Parents*, Second Edition, (Holmes Beach, Florida: Learning Publications, Inc., 1983): 14.

<sup>9</sup> For a detailed discussion on the five different roles these COAs assumed Cf. Shanthi Ranganathan, "Families in Transition: Victims of Alcoholism and New Challenges Ahead", in *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 26(4), (2004): 399-405

## Peer Pressure and Adolescents

Why do adolescents more than others give in to peer pressure, especially with regard to substance use? Adolescence being a stage where one feels that one is no more a child and at the same time not yet an adult, one is forced to search for self-identity. This causes certain stress in the adolescents who often give in to peer pressure to achieve a sense of identity in the presence of their peers. Besides, over-identification with negative characteristics is a problem that can occur at this stage.<sup>10</sup> Particularly the nicotine users report peer-pressure as the single most important cause for initiation.<sup>11</sup> The adolescents have very poor refusal skills. It is all the more so among the lower economic groups where such adolescents are often school dropouts, child labourers or street children. Adolescents suffer also from the fear of being rejected by the peers and their need for self-esteem also is quite an issue at this stage. One positive aspect about these children is that most of them want to come out of addiction. This is true even among street boys.<sup>12</sup> Such a desire should be made use of positively in order to help them out of addiction.

## Implications

Peer pressure rules high among the adolescents for want of certain life-skills such as refusal skills. This can be imparted to them through careful awareness-creation and skill-building. Besides, they need more opportunities for more meaningful involvement and association. The schools can include such opportunities into extra-curricular activities such as music, dance, sports etc., and thus help the adolescents find joy and satisfaction in numerous other things than just in substance use. Like responsible parenting, we need to develop a concept of *responsible schooling* wherein the academic results are not the only thing that matters; equally important is the integral development of the

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<sup>10</sup> Ackerman, *op.cit.*, 73

<sup>11</sup> Manu Agarwal, Anil Nischal, Anju Agarwal, Anju, Jitendra Verma, and Saranya Dhanasekaran, "Substance Abuse in Children and adolescents in India", in *J. Indian Assoc. Child Adolesc. Ment. Health*, 9 (3), (2013): 68

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 72



students. Teachers can be mentors and school counsellors can play a major role in tackling peer pressure among adolescents. According to Don Bosco, a great nineteenth century Italian educator of adolescents, a lot more can be achieved if the educator comes out with great affection and respect for such children.<sup>13</sup> Researchers have also shown that involving the youngsters in meaningful voluntary service and even in faith-based activities can significantly reduce the risks of addictions.<sup>14</sup>

### Understanding Adolescence and Substance Abuse

The study of adolescence has fascinated people all over the world. Some would say that adolescence is a period of wonder. Scientists believed for years that adolescent brain was essentially an adult one, but just a few miles away. Over the last decade, the scientific community has discovered that the adolescent years encompass vitally important stages of brain development.<sup>15</sup> Earlier it was thought that onset of puberty and the resulting secretion of hormones were sufficient to explain the complex behaviour of adolescence. Today we know that there is much more at play in their brain, as its areas are only being built while many chemicals, especially, neurotransmitters, the brains “messengers”, are in a flux. Because of this, the adolescents have a window of opportunity with an increased capacity for extraordinary accomplishments. Rightly, adolescence is called an age of opportunity by the UNICEF’s world’s children report, 2011. But flexibility, growth and exuberance are a double-edged sword because of its “open” state. An open and excitable brain can also be adversely affected by stress, drugs, chemical substances, and any number of changes in the environment. Because of such an overactive brain, those influences can result in trauma dramatically more serious than they are for adults.

<sup>13</sup> Chrys Saldanha, *Exploring Salesian Life Today* (Mumbai: Tej-Prasarini Publication, 2015): 111ff.

<sup>14</sup> Valarie Schroeder, Michelle L Kelley, and William Fals-Stewart, “Effects of Parental Substance Abuse on Youth in Their Homes”, in *The Prevention Researcher*, November, Vol. 13(4), (2006). <http://TPRonline.org>

<sup>15</sup> For a detailed discussion on teenage brain, Cf. Frances E Jensen, and Ellis Amy Nutt, *The Teenage Brain: A Neuroscientist’s Survival Guide to Raising Adolescents and Young Adults* (London: Thorsons, 2015).

Besides, the teenage brain is developed only up to 80% of its potential. The remaining 20% - the frontal lobes that really make an adolescent a civilized and intelligent adult- are completed only at twenty years of age. An immature prefrontal cortex means less control over impulsive behaviour, less understanding of the consequences, and fewer tools to stop the behaviour. Adolescents with nicotine in their blood had significantly poorer scores on tests of reading, math, and visuospatial skills. Another consistent finding is that the more the teens smoked the less activity there is in their prefrontal cortex. This will surely cause poor decision- making in teens.

### Implications

According to the UNICEF, there are 1.2 billion adolescent children in the world and 243 million of them live in India.<sup>16</sup> Census figures of 2011 show that in Tamil Nadu, there are around 1.24 crore boys and girls in the 10-19 age group and nearly 1.26 crores youths in the 15-24 age group. On the employment scene, while 63.16% of the adolescents and nearly 58.80% of the youth in rural areas are employed, in urban areas 36.83% of the adolescents and 41.19% of the youth are employed.<sup>17</sup> How sensitive are we to the growth conditions of our teens? What about the majority of these teens who are already out of school and employed? We need to sensitize the adolescents to understand themselves better, especially given their acute vulnerability to addictive adventures. The parents, teachers and the policy makers too need to be sensitized in this regard. NACOA has come up with a 'Kit for Educators' to deal particularly with the COAs. It can be easily adapted for the substance abusing children as well as the general teen population.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Cf. UNICEF's State of the World's Children 2011, Retrieved from [www.unicef.org/adolescence/files/sowc\\_2011\\_Main\\_Report](http://www.unicef.org/adolescence/files/sowc_2011_Main_Report).

<sup>17</sup> B. Sivakumar, "Most of Tamil Nadu's adolescents, youth live in rural areas, shows census", *The Times of India city Chennai* (2014), Retrieved on 01-12-2016 from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/articleshow/45008956.cms>

<sup>18</sup> Cf. NACOA (National Association for Children of Alcoholics, *A Kit for Educators*, Fourth Edition, (Rockville, Maryland: NACOA Pub., 2001).

## Easy Availability of Substances

Abuse of volatile substances or inhalants has increased in children and adolescents due to its easy availability.<sup>19</sup> By adolescence they have also seen their first exposure to many drugs today, especially those easily available – glues and other inhalants, cannabis, tobacco and alcohol. They are called gateway drugs, which supposedly cause its users to move on to harder drugs. Though total prohibition is mentioned as the goal in the Directive Principles of the State Policy of the Indian Constitutions, most of the member States today draw almost one fourth of their total annual revenue only from the sale of liquor. In fact it has been repeatedly proved to the rulers that this is not a true income as the social costs arising from the use and abuse of alcohol is much higher than the income. But no one seems to take note of it. The Bhore Committee Report, 1946 warned the State authorities even before Independence, that income from the sale of alcohol was not to be considered as a genuine income at all.<sup>20</sup> Then there are the vested interests that draw huge profits from both licit and illicit sale of substances. Most of them enjoy protection from powerful politicians. Obviously there is a lack of adequate laws with teeth. Even these are poorly implemented.<sup>21</sup>

## Implications

The State governments need to review their existing alcohol policy and make sure that it is not motivated by revenue considerations but guided by public health interests, particularly keeping in mind the best interests of the children.<sup>22</sup> In this regard, it is good to look at the sixteen questions raised by the Chennai High Court<sup>23</sup> recently:

<sup>19</sup> Manu Agarwal, Anil Nischal, Anju Agarwal and Jitendra Verma, Saranya Dhanasekaran, *op.cit.*, 70.

<sup>20</sup> Gururaj et. al., *op.cit.*, ii, 23.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Vivek Benegal, "India: alcohol and public health", in *Addiction: 100* (2005: 1051–1056).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 1054.

<sup>23</sup> K.T. Sangameswaran, "Why not total prohibition, asks HC (2015)", Retrieved on 30-11-2016, from [www.thehindu.com/new/national/tamil-nadu/why-not-total-prohibition-asks-madras-high-court/article6659501.ece](http://www.thehindu.com/new/national/tamil-nadu/why-not-total-prohibition-asks-madras-high-court/article6659501.ece)



1. When the Indian Motor Vehicles Act, schedule 185 clearly states that it is a crime to drive in a drunken state, how is it that the state governments open liquor shops and bars?
2. Is the government policy against the Constitutions and the Motor Vehicles Act?
3. Do the governments offer security to people only through the revenue received from sale of liquor?
4. Why should not the Centre and State governments consider implementing total prohibition in the country?
5. Are there not ways other than sale of liquor to improve the income of the country?
6. Proper documentation of alcohol related accidents and crimes can help in taking proper security actions.
7. Is it not important to sensitize the children at school and outside about alcohol related harms?
8. Why do not we administer alcohol tests for the government servants working in the government offices, as there are complaints in this regard? This can help to take departmental actions against those who come drunk to the office.
9. Why not the government conduct awareness camps to sensitize the people on alcohol related accidents?
10. Why not set up counselling centres to help those who are addicted to alcohol?
11. Why not the governments close the liquor bars?
12. Why not make drunken driving as non-bailable offence, by bringing appropriate amendments to the existing laws?
13. Why not the prohibition authorities conduct regular checking of vehicles on the highways?
14. Why not set up alcohol test instruments and mobile judicial courts along the highways?
15. Why not arrest the drunken drivers rather than simply fining them?

16. Why not change the working hours of the wine shops from the 10 am-10 pm schedule to 12 noon-08 pm?

State governments will do well to take notice of these questions. As of now, there has been no response from them. Similar questions can be easily raised with regard to the tobacco policy of the country too.

In 2015, there was a case study on the drug addiction among adolescent COAs, in which the authors of the present article themselves were involved.<sup>24</sup> This study took a group of five male children who were intensive inhalant users and had become drug dependent. They were motivated to give up drugs through a 10-day residential camp in a full-fledged hospital setting with a psychiatry section. There was serious concern in all the five boys on their psychopathological sides. Their behaviour was marked by enormous deviance, character disorder, impulsiveness, hastiness, recklessness and so on. The psychiatrist met them individually and in group and prescribed medicines and provided the following instructions which give us an insight in to the intricacies of treatment.

- a. The prescribed medicines should not be in the custody of a boy but with a senior person who would administer the medicine everyday personally.
- b. Family therapy has to begin immediately. Parents who are addicted should be motivated for treatment.
- c. Motivation and awareness creation should continue for the children.
- d. A change of environment is necessary for the boys, where a certain healthy routine is ensured and positive role models are found.
- e. Counselling and group therapy should continue.
- f. Short or long term technical training should be arranged for those in late adolescence.

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. D. John and Godwin J. Premsingh, "Drug addiction among adolescent children of alcoholics and a residential camp approach for de-addiction", in *International Journal of Contemporary Research in Social Science* (2015), Volume 2 Issue 2. Visit: [www.ijar.in](http://www.ijar.in)

- g. The boys should have some non-addictive eatables as alternatives to take at the time of craving.
- h. Regular physical exercises and games are important.
- i. Solidarity groups will have to be formed for these children.

The treatment process could be wearisome if the team members lacked commitment. The boys were unruly, not used any form of discipline and impetuous and unpredictable in their behaviour. The team had to deal with them with great care, utmost friendliness and unconditional acceptance. All these things mean a greater financial commitment on the part of the government.

### **Recommendations**

Research shows that rates of tobacco use, harmful alcohol use, and illicit drug use in adolescents can be reduced by a combination of regulatory, early-intervention, and harm-reduction approaches. Community-based and school-based preventive strategies have also been found effective in other low income countries.<sup>25</sup> Majority of the substance abusing adolescents have expressed a desire to quit too. That is a thing commonly not found among the adult substance abusers. Treatment efforts have to keep this in mind. Stricter legislation and monitoring are quite essential. The adolescents coming from lower income groups, those who are away from home, and the migrant adolescents need special attention. Sufficient number of treatment centres have to be provided by the government. The income coming from the sale of alcohol must be spent not only for the treatment and rehabilitation of adolescent substance abusers but also for the alcoholic parents in general. For, often their children faced the highest risk of becoming addicted to substances as we have already pointed out. Prevention is more effective, cost-saving, and time-saving than treatment processes. Preventive strategies therefore are very vital. School curriculum needs to include awareness education on addiction and provide for learning social skills such as refusal skills; promote many co-curricular activities including opportunities for adventures, provide

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<sup>25</sup> Agarwal et.al., *op.cit.*, 71.



for voluntary service, encourage faith based activities both at school and home. Of course, school counselling is very important. Parents, teachers and community leaders have to be sensitized on the specific vulnerability of the teen brain as well as its possibilities.

## **Conclusion**

Substance abuse in adolescence is a major problem today and yet it is not taken note of seriously by the government in India. The issue needs thorough scientific investigation, the findings of which should form the basis for a fresh national child policy and further interventions. This means adequate funds for research. The urgency of the problem should be realized with regard to this most vulnerable group among children, and more focussed interventions should begin at the earliest. It is important to tackle simultaneously the four crucial issues highlighted in this article. The schools and the local communities are settings for ideal and effective intervention. Creative and imaginative approaches are essential in order to reach out to the youngsters of today. Appropriate preventive strategies have to be worked out. The government should deal firmly with vested interests in this regard. All this should be done in the best interests of our children who are our future.

# **A Study on Surrogate Alcohol Advertising in India**

**A. Stephen**

As direct advertising of alcohol, cigarettes, tobacco, and narcotic products are banned in many countries including India, one has to deal with a tricky type of advertising called, 'surrogate advertising'. It is not only a method of indirect advertising for surrogate products, but also a serious issue linked to intoxication. Liquor industry is an inevitable aspect of Indian economy, commerce, health, human resource and culture, and it is directly or indirectly endorsed by media through surrogate alcohol advertising. Various factors and dimensions related to law, celebrities, consumers and media are involved in this dynamics. The author, Dr A. Stephen S.J. is Director, Vaigarai Publishing House, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu.

## **1. Introduction**

"In advertising, what do detergents wash better: white collar or brains?" is a question from an unknown author emphasizing the concealed power of advertising. When consumers or media viewers think of advertising, they understand it, in general, in terms of its direct usage, endorsing celebrities, slogans, illustrations, catchy phrases, music, graphics, etc. For media analysts, a study on advertising is not just a deconstruction of both form and content of the same, but also a critical understanding of its dynamics, implications, and impacts. Compared to usual commercial ads, it is more challenging to analyze the ads of alcohol products, as their use is generally perceived as harmful with the implications on individual, family, society, country, and world at large. As direct advertising on such products are banned in many countries including India, one has to deal with a tricky type of advertising called, 'surrogate advertising'.

Surrogate advertising is either known as “guerrilla advertising” or “covert advertising”. These phrases indicate indirect advertising, though consumers subliminally perceive the original product. In other words, it is a method of indirect advertising for surrogate products, when certain commodities such as alcohol, cigarettes, tobacco, and narcotic products cannot be advertised. As far as India is concerned, surrogate advertising was launched during 1994 – 1995, as Cable Television Networks Rules 1994 and Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act 1995 came into force banning direct liquor, tobacco and cigarette advertisements.

Since liquor industry is an inevitable aspect of Indian economy, commerce, health, human resource and culture and it is directly or indirectly endorsed by media, this paper attempts to present various factors and dimensions involved in surrogate alcohol advertising.

## 2. Ban on Direct Alcohol Ads

There are evidences suggesting that promotion of alcohol products through advertising increases the likelihood of people initiating or drinking or increasing the consumption of liquor products.<sup>1</sup> Persistent viewing of something can almost register in subconscious mind. Therefore, regular exposure to the ads of such product has a possibility of tempting one to drink. Several studies confirm that there is a direct link between advertising spends and increased consumption of an advertised product. Some studies suggest that there is an association between exposure to alcohol advertising or promotional activity and subsequent alcohol consumption in young people.<sup>2</sup> While direct alcohol advertising is banned, one wonders how the age of initiation to alcohol consumption has dropped to 17 years. Certainly surrogate advertising is one of the vital factors in this regard. The sole aim of advertising is to take a share of

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<sup>1</sup> “Alcohol Marketing and Regulatory Policy Environment in India”, in *Public Health Foundation of India* (New Delhi: Health Promotion Unit, 2013): 34

<sup>2</sup> Lesley A Smith, and David R Foxcroft, 2009, “The effect of alcohol advertising, marketing and portrayal on drinking behaviour in young people: a systematic review of prospective cohort studies”, <http://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1471-2458-9-51>, 16.0916



the trust between the brand and target consumers. Hence, the liquor industries would agree, at least to some extent, that advertising influences the brand choice. It is proper to note that a brand is a sum total of the product with the imagery and emotions.

The alcohol industry claims that the aim of advertising is just to promote market share and not to encourage any underage persons to drink. But, the following reasons, as researches suggest otherwise,<sup>3</sup> are cited by different countries for banning direct advertisement of such products.

1. The use of toxic commodities is detrimental to the health of people.
2. Alcohol advertisements frequently portray liquor as an enhancement to the people, tempt them to drink, and hit their lives at risk.
3. Alcohol advertisements, in general, associate alcohol ads with attributes, particularly of youth.
4. The sex appeal in alcoholic advertisements is also very high.
5. Sex appeal in such ads suggests an idea that liquor gives confidence.

The Constitution of India prohibits alcohol in Article 47 saying, "Duty of the State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health: The State shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties and, in particular, the State shall endeavor to bring about prohibition of the consumption except for medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health". Keeping this in mind, any advertisement directly or indirectly promoting the production, sale, or consumption of cigarettes, tobacco products, wine, liquor, or other intoxicants is prohibited by the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994, the Advertising Codes of Doordarshan, and the All India Radio and Norms for Journalist Conduct issued by the Press Council of India. The Indian advertising market is regulated

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<sup>3</sup> *Essays UK*, 2015 "Why Alcoholic Advertisements Should Be Banned", <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/media/why-alcoholic-advertisements-should-be-banned-media-essay.php>, 19.09.16

and controlled by the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), a voluntary organization and a non-statutory body.

As alcohol industry provides revenue from alcohol products, so far, no national policy has been evolved. In other words, there is no uniform legislation or central statutory body regulating the advertising industry.

### 3. Surrogate Ads

The legal ban on direct alcohol ads was a setback to the alcohol industries which generated remarkably high revenue. However, the industries manipulate the legal loopholes and launch surrogate products such as cool drinks, juice, mineral water, soda etc. Now these products set an easy way out for advertising the brand name. Thus, apart from the sale of the surrogate products, the brand name is well established through advertising in the minds of consumers who are familiar with the actual liquor or cigarette.

Most probably Bagpiper was the first brand in India to launch surrogate advertisement by introducing Bagpiper Soda in the market. Here are some examples of companies engaged in surrogate product advertising in India:<sup>4</sup> Bagpiper Soda, Cassettes and CDs, Haywards Soda, Royal Challenge Golf Accessories and Mineral Water, Kingfisher Mineral Water, White Mischief Holidays, Smirnoff Cassettes and CDs, Imperial Blue Cassettes and CDs and Teacher's Achievement Awards. Here are some more examples for specific association of the brand with surrogate business or product or sponsorship:

1. Royal Challengers is popularly known in the disguise of a cricket team.
2. Smirnoff is associated with CDs.
3. Haywards 5000 is promoted with the help of soda.
4. Pernod Ricard created a 90 minute film for their blended whiskey brand Seagram's Imperial Blue titled with the brand's tagline 'Men Will Be Men'.
5. Kingfisher is known for its Airline.

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<sup>4</sup>Naik, Naik & Company Advocates, 2014, "Surrogate Advertising In India: Permissible Or Not", <http://naiknaik.com/surrogate-advertising-in-india-permissible-or-not/22.09.16>

It is imperative to note that the sale of original products, such as, liquor or cigarette is the prime source of revenue for companies, when compared to the sale of surrogate products. Sometimes there is not much difference between surrogate ads and the original ads, because they change or modify only the text or voice-overs. The capturing aspect of surrogate ads lies in associating with cool, sexy, popular and fun loving people. In most of Indian surrogate ads, one can effortlessly witness the explicit sexual content manipulating male sexual fantasies. Various studies and researches point out a list of implications and impacts of surrogate ads.

1. They are not only misleading, but also present false and dishonest information in many cases.
2. They are anti-social as they promote the product that is generally considered as destructive for the society.
3. They endorse deceptive impressions leading to moral degradation.
4. They induce the mind of consumers, at least to try the product.
5. Customers are able to identify the surrogate product in relation to the original.

Another area of concern in surrogate ads is the value it promotes. For instance, in Imperial Blue ads, when man acts inappropriately or behave forgetfully particularly to a woman, the slogan of justification given is "Men will be men". It is not only a justification, but also a kind of impunity given to men to behave as they like, even inappropriately. How will we take it if the same slogan of justification is applied to women?

The issue of surrogate ads has become more complicated and tough to deal with only after the entry of Indian made Foreign Liquor, shortly known as IMFL. It designates western-style hard liquors which are mass-produced in India to compete against indigenous or country liquor. In the current advertising and marketing scenario, it is noted that there is a definite decline in the market share of indigenous liquor products. In addition, the country liquor industry is comparatively less fashionable than the other due to ban on local liquor and lack of advertising strategy



and capacity. In short, the issue of surrogate advertising depends on how the Indian regulations deal with IMFL.

#### **4. The Role of Celebrities**

Celebrity is more important in marketing. The role of cricketers and film stars is significant in the endorsement of such products. The young generation easily gets attracted by the endorsement of their favourite and popular stars. In general, many fans are interested in knowing the activities of their celebrities and the ads endorsed by them easily grab their attention. For instance, while conducting Media Education workshops for youth, the author of this paper used to present several print ads of both celebrities and non-celebrities for them to choose. In most cases, they chose the ads endorsed by celebrities. Though there are disadvantages, such as, any problem in the reputation or credibility of these popular personalities will have adverse effect on the product, still the industry tries to harvest on their appeal to consumers. It is believed that there are following advantages in using celebrities in advertising.

1. Influence Consumer Purchases.
2. Build Awareness.
3. Position a Brand.
4. Attract New Users.
5. Breathe Life Into Failing Brand.
6. Build brand equity

Sidelining their social responsibilities, these celebrities opt for brand endorsements for an obvious reason that these ads serve as an attractive and easy source of revenue. In fact these endorsements are preferred to than doing movies or playing cricket which demands more time, energy and skills.

#### **5. Law against Surrogate Ads**

The Indian government has imposed certain laws and regulations and the Indian Judiciary has given various judgments against direct or surrogate alcohol ads. However, the liquor industry questions the double standard of the government on the ground that it permits to do liquor

business and collects huge chunk of taxes from profits, an important source revenue, but bans advertisements, a media tool for sales promotion. However, the launch of surrogate advertisements is advantageous not only for liquor industry, but also media industry which earns substantial revenue from the ads.

If one closely watches IPL Cricket matches, surrogate ads cannot be missed as the teams prominently promote the logos of liquor companies. Intelligent use of the words or addition or omission of one or two letters in the brand name is sufficient to claim that the name is something else. For instance, the word 'Royal Challenge' is closely related to 'Royal Challengers'. The addition of two letters, r&s, is adequate to change an actual ad into surrogate one. When a case was filed against this blatant form of surrogate advertising in 2008,<sup>5</sup> the Supreme Court observed that the team was named 'Royal Challengers', not 'Royal Challenge'.<sup>6</sup> Though it is a covert promotion of liquor products, it is easily ignored by the Indian Judiciary on technical grounds.

The liquor industry deliberately distorts the intention of the law and manipulates conveniently the narrow gap between the presentation of original and of surrogate products. In short, though surrogate advertising is prohibited in India, we have a long way to go to realize its effectiveness.

## 6. The Role of Media

Though surrogate advertising is banned in mainstream media, the industry explores its means and methods to continue its advertising in the same media. For instance, Kingfisher owns private radio channels to advertise its new product of 'strong beer'. Some critics observe that the company uses in its radio ads the word 'beer' many times with

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<sup>5</sup>IANs, 2008, "Now Ramadoss challenges Bangalore IPL team over name", [http://twocircles.net/2008apr29/now\\_ramadoss\\_challenges\\_bangalore\\_ipl\\_team\\_over\\_name.html#.V9jzCiGTIFs](http://twocircles.net/2008apr29/now_ramadoss_challenges_bangalore_ipl_team_over_name.html#.V9jzCiGTIFs), 24.09.16

<sup>6</sup>Laboni Bhakta, 2014, " Surrogate advertisement of Liquor in India: How Indian liquor companies game the rules?", <http://blog.ipleaders.in/surrogate-advertisement-of-liquor-in-india-how-indian-liquor-companies-game-the-rules/>, 24.09.16

an overlap of 'beep' in the name of censoring. It is an obvious mockery of the ban on alcohol advertising in the mask of surrogate advertising.

In Indian film media, drinking liquor was absolutely associated with villainy two decades ago, as it was considered as an expression of immoral behavior. Later, anti-heroes started indulging in the habit of drinking liquor. Yet it was considered as an immoral and a scandalous behavior and it was justified with a piece of flashback scene why he turned out to be an anti-hero. Of course, after retaining *Dharma* or succeeding in love affair in climax scene, he gave up all bad behaviours and was converted as a good soul. For the past one decade, it is difficult to draw a border line between hero and anti-hero and villain, because heroism seems to be a mixture of all these three characters. The heroes of four Tamil blockbuster movies namely, *Parutthi Veeran* (2007), *Kalavani* (2010), *Mankatha* (2011), and *Mari* (2015) could be cited as good examples for this. In most of such movies, there is no sign of conversion or change in the characterization even in the climax. In this context, drinking liquor is not at all a moral issue to be discussed in film media. For the past five years, it is rare to watch Tamil movies without a scene of men drinking at TASMAC<sup>7</sup> bar or buying liquor from the same. The filmmakers can easily justify that their movies just "reflect reality" in the society. Further, reference to alcohol and surrogate business is becoming frequent in popular Indian movies. For instance, in 2012 a Hindi movie was released with title of *Cocktail* which advertised certain multinational alcohol brands. The worst part of this evolution is that the portrayal of some heroines casually drinking liquor. By and large, portrayal of such characters is very positive with desirable attributes. Even though this trend does not directly promote any liquor brand, they do encourage having a taste of liquor. At the same time, popular cine stars endorse these brands, for they are the brand ambassadors.

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<sup>7</sup> The Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation (TASMAC) is a company owned by the Government of Tamil Nadu, which has a monopoly over wholesale and retail vending of alcoholic beverages in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.



Everyday we watch panel discussion on TV channels on various burning issues. One hardly comes across any channel discussing the issue of surrogate ads. The reason is obvious that these channels depend on the revenue from such ads. It is estimated that 7 to 11 percent revenue hit Indian Television media after the ban on direct or indirect advertisements on liquor and tobacco products. Hence, the rise of surrogate ads and the new technology of satellite television have opened a new gate for television industry to bypass legal restrictions. Several other studies prove the phenomenal increase of expenditure on surrogate ads by the industry.

There is an interesting turn in the journey of alcohol advertising as social media provides a comfortable platform for the liquor brands. Since social media cannot be controlled by the existing law or because of the absence of any law, it has become easy for companies to reach out and interact with target consumers. In addition, it is vital to note that youth, comparing with other age group, are more vibrant with social media. Of course these companies claim to have certain self-regulation with regard to social media advertising. In most of alcohol related sites, the user is supposed to provide some basic information like the date of birth of adult user. This sort of simple control mechanism is not sufficient to control viral advertising of the product, as the user has a lot of possibilities to share information with his friends and like-minded group. Indirectly the users themselves take part in the process of advertising and promoting the brand. If someone receives information related to a particular alcohol product from his/her close friend, the credibility is added to the brand as it is shared among trusty worthy persons.

A study on the misuse of social media for alcohol advertising highlights the following facts:<sup>8</sup>

1. Facebook was the most popular platform, followed by YouTube and Twitter, for marketing of alcohol.

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<sup>8</sup>Zakirhusain A Shaikh, Rambha Pathak, MC Kapilashrami. 2015, "Misuse of social media marketing by alcohol companies", <http://www.jmhbb.org/article.asp?issn=0971,8990;year=2015;volume=20;issue=1;spage=22;epage=27;aulast=Shaikh,18.09.16>

7. Urban users were found to be most receptive to social media marketing of alcohol.
8. Most of the audience of this social media marketing of alcohol was young population; some of them even legally under-aged to buy alcohol.

### 7. Towards the Future

It is quite evident that the growth of liquor industry is significantly interconnected to surrogate ads in the context of prohibition of direct ads. The industry has succeeded in positioning its brand and name in the competitive liquor market. Various factors and dimensions including media, laws, celebrities, consumers etc. are involved in the dynamics of the industry and the issue of intoxication. A pertaining question remains as a challenge for the future: Will ban on surrogate advertising for surrogate products be totally executed? The approach of the government on this issue is under a cloud. As long as it permits the actual liquor market and depends on its revenue from taxes, there is less possibility of banning surrogate ads. However, the following suggestions may help to explore new possibilities to counter this menace in future:

1. Public debate and discussion should focus on a new law treating the multiplex products, both surrogate and original products, as a collective unit under one industry.
2. Indian foreign investment policy in relation to IMFL should be scanned.
3. The law of prohibition of alcohol advertisements should include social media.
4. The moral standing of sponsorship by liquor industry to various cultural and entertainment programmes should be questioned.
5. The network among the liquor industry, media industry, celebrities and sponsored events should be exposed to the public.
6. Efforts should be made to create awareness among consumers on the covert dynamics of these ads.
7. Social media should be seriously thought of for such awareness campaign.

# **The Supernatural through Substance?**

## **The Use of the Intoxicants among the Indigenous**

**James Ponniah**

The social habit of consuming intoxicating substances is as old as humanity itself spread across civilizations, nations and ethnicities. Equally widespread is its usage in religious settings and ritual contexts. This paper seeks to explore the later phenomenon by looking at the practices and worldviews of two marginal groups, namely, the Lohorung Rai Tribe in Himalayas and the Sufi malangs in Punjab and draws the reader's attention to the capacity of the indigenous intoxicants to produce 'abundant events,' to employ Robert Orsi's expression, that can be understood as 'real' only when one transcends the limits of modernist rationality. The author, Dr James Ponniah is Assistant Professor, Department of Christian Studies, University of Madras.

### **Introduction**

This paper seeks to explore the use of intoxicants in the folk and tribal religious traditions of India. A quick survey of available materials in this regard reveals that the indigenous and local traditions have availed themselves of intoxicants for different purposes and occasions in differing ways, quantities and frequencies. The tribal and the indigenous people's use of intoxicants in India such as *ganja*, *bhang*, rice beer is three-fold: 1) As offerings to the deities and dead ancestors, 2) As a medicine to cure certain illness, 3) As a stimulant to attain altered state to communicate with the supernatural in a state of trance, often for the purpose of divination. Various expressions such as psychoactive drugs, psychedelics, psycholytics, hallucinogens, phantastica, psychotomimetics, mysticomimetics and psychodysleptics or entheogens have been circulating in scholarly literatures to refer to



the capacity of these substances to induce alternated states. Of this, the word *entheogens* is currently popular. Writers like Alan Watts and Stanislav Grof<sup>1</sup> have likened these substances to telescopes or microscopes, considering them to be incredibly valuable tools when they are used wisely and responsibly. As the telescope is to astronomy, and the microscope is to biology, so are *entheogens* to the psychology of religious experience. In their view, as the cosmos is not within the telescope, nor the contents of cells within the microscope, so the alternative states of consciousness encountered during the action of *entheogens*, including mystical states and archetypal visions, are not intrinsic to the substances themselves. They belong to a transcendental realm and a spiritual world that lies beyond the Kantian and the modernist categories of time and space. This essay that discusses the role of *entheogens* among the indigenous peoples is largely drawn upon the phenomena of rice beer among the Lohorung tribal people and of *bhang* among the *Malangs* in its first part and goes on, in its later part, to unpack the capacity of the *entheogens* to produce 'abundant events' – to employ Robert Orsi's expression.

## I. Rice Beer among the Lohorung Rai Tribe

Lohorung Rai live in the eastern hills of Himalayas. Rice beer is valued and regarded as both a 'powerful' and a 'clever' (*ichuba*) agent. There is a saying among them: 'if people drank just a little too much then they cried like a dog, if they drank more, they fought like a bear and if they drank even more they lost their mind and slept like a snake'. In order to understand their use of beer and other intoxicants in their rituals and religious practices, we first need to enter into their worldview. Like many other tribal societies across the globe, Lohorungs have a holistic worldview which recognizes the fundamental unity between the supernatural, the natural and the human. They hold that 'good health' is part and parcel of the ancestral order, the original primeval order, which is recorded in their myths to foster this unitary vision.

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<sup>1</sup> See, Allan Watts, *A The Joyous Cosmology: Adventures in the Chemistry of Consciousness* (New York: Pantheon, 1962) and Stanislav Grof, *Realms of the Human Unconscious: Observations from LSD Research* (New York: Viking Press, 1975).

Their worldview divides the reality into those objects considered 'ancestral' (connoted by a term *samek*) and 'non-ancestral.' They believe that only certain animals, trees, plants and objects have *samek* (ancestral name). Only phenomena with *samek* names can be used as ritual tools as they alone can belong to the primeval times. They all "have a relationship with ancestors. Everything with a ritual *samek* name is tribal, traditional and ancient. They are the continuation of ancestral time, thereby ensuring its immortality... In spite of the global trend towards modernisation ... they still conceive of the strength, support and protection of their clans and society as coming from the primeval past."<sup>2</sup> When it comes to *samek*, Lohorungs do not make any distinction between 'animate' and 'inanimate' objects. Beer, trees, pigs and chickens - all have *samek* names. All are connected to the mythical past and to particular ancestors, and all possess the vitalising quality of *saya* (animating life force). For them, "beer has a way of being in the world, which links it to trees and chickens. All three are treated with respect not because they are seen as 'animate', but because they are associated, through the quality of *saya*, with the mythical realm and this gives them a kind of consciousness...In ontological terms what all of them share is the key essence of *saya* which gives them a special relationship both to living humans and the ancestors"<sup>3</sup>.

The ritual tools of beer, trees, pigs and chickens bring about both material and visual connections between two different worlds. They are perceptible forms that make the mysteries of the ancestral reality and the primeval world more accessible to the ailing community member and others in need. They make the shamans, the priests and the patients see what they do not see otherwise. The tribal people describe the power of 'seeing', so crucial to healing, as lying deep in the belly and as coming from deep in their memory, mind, and consciousness. The

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<sup>2</sup> Hardman, C. E. (2002) "Beer, Trees, Pigs and Chickens: Medical Tools of the Lohorung Shaman and Priest," in Patricia Anne Baker and Gillian Carr, eds., *Practitioners, Practices and Patients: New Approaches to Medical Archaeology and Anthropology* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002): 81-108, 84.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 86

tribal people here distinguish between two kinds of 'seeing': *lemmang* and *semmang*. *Lemmang* is what we can see, when we are awake, which is limited. *Semmang* is a vision in which 'restrictions of time and space and the divisions of the world disappear.'<sup>4</sup> *Semmang* may be available during dreams. But human beings have lost the ability to 'see' and talk to this other reality. Hence the capability of shamans and priests to 'see' is accepted as a valuable and authoritative way of knowing the world. It is in this regard that the intoxicant of beer is used by the Lohorung in triple contexts: A) to heal the patients by a priest (*yatangpa*) in a household in a private place. B) to worship the deity *Chawatangma* in the forest with a help of 'ritual journey' undertaken by the shaman priest (*yatangpa*) and C) to get into trance by a shaman (*mangpa*) to raise the *saya* of the ancestral head. The use of beer in each of this context is explained below very briefly.

#### A. In the Healing of the Sick:

When a person is sick in a house, a priest is brought to perform the ritual of throwing cut ginger on a banana leaf. When fallen, if the cut side of ginger is down, then it is the spirit of the ancestor called *pappamama-chi* ('grandfather-grandmother' ancestor) who has afflicted the sick person. This situation calls for sacrifice made of chicken and other objects. In this context, the *yatangpa* is given warm beer in a *tongba* (a bamboo container) as beer contains 'medicinal' value in its 'ability to lure or coax ancestral and spiritual beings and at the same time indicate respect.'<sup>5</sup> It is also a form of hospitality indicating respect both for the priest and the ancestral spirits. The beer is given to the patient as well. Here beer is understood as *samek* that brings forth *saya*.

#### B. In Worshipping the deity *Chawatangma*:

As owner of the forests, trees, the animals, the rivers, stones, rocks and fields, *Chawatangma* is seen as having enormous power over men and women. Having created the natural world (and the

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 88

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 89



variety of species within it) from which her name derives, she demands recognition of her ownership and respect for her domain. A ritual 'house' or shrine is constructed for *Chawatangma* at village outskirts, the location appropriate for her as she is part of the 'wild'. The shrine, while representing and recreating mythical stories, helps establish mediated relations with the ancestors. The trees provide the framework around which the other medicinal tools, the beer, and pig or chicken, cooked rice, eggs, ginger, a vessel of water, lentils and soya beans are placed. Just as they stage the event, the ritual activities of the priest or shaman are a process through which communication is made with the ancestral beings and the power of *saya* is revitalised. Central to this process of revitalisation in each ancestral ritual is the 'ritual journey' made by the *yatangpa*.

The journey mapped onto the landscape and the path for each ancestor is a defining feature of their ritual. The shaman priest in a trance state, which is more of a meditative type, concentrates on the shrine, the tree houses, the offerings laid out, the beer and the sacrificial chickens. He then journeys on a mental or imaginary flight re-enacting a stylized and traditional journey that has power in its very re-enactment and draws the attention of the ancestors to the offerings of beer, ginger, etc. The shaman is believed to fly as a bird and come to a lake, and then search for the clan's own spring (*chawa*), drink of it and sour up to the high Himalayas to a gold lake where he can communicate with the Chawatangama wherein prayers are uttered to increase the *saya* of the clan as high as the mountain, and to revitalise the *saya* of the individuals. It is to be noted that while the *saya* of the ritual objects are made as offering to the deity and to the ancestors, in turn, what is solicited is the increase in the *saya* of the human beings.

### C. *In the Divination of Shamans:*

Divination in this community is performed by the shamans, known as *mangapa(s)* either to cure the sickness of family member by raising the *saya* of the head of the household or to foretell the future fortunes and misfortunes of the individuals and households.

But divination is an outcome of trance and trance is brought about only in ritual context aided by ritual tools such as uncooked rice, a pitcher of water and the branches of three trees – all of which represent the power of the primeval symbolically. The tools are capable of changing the mood of the ancestors and gods invoked in the ritual and thereby the well-being of the household, but also that of the patient, who is a microcosm of the household.

To cure a person of a disease, the shaman first attempts to raise the patients' links with the ancestors by raising his/her *saya*. While performing the rituals with the help of above mentioned ritual weapons, shaman drinks rice beer, uses the metal plate as a drum to sing, dances and invokes the ancestral spirits in ritual language to raise the ailing person's *saya*, his or her vital spirit and connections with the ancestors. Prolonging the act of divination further, the shaman also seeks the revitalization of whole household or the whole clan at times. In this ritual repertoire, the elders of the village also join with the following chanting: "O raise the *saya* of this boy. If an enemy has lowered his *saya*, if his father, mother, wife, children, brothers or sisters, have lowered his *saya*, today you raise it; on the right and on the left we elders are sitting, so you raise his *saya*; from today, make his *saya* strong and walk close to your enemies, make them wander and run away."<sup>6</sup>

To sum up, the above mentioned rituals of the Lohorungs demonstrate that their worldview spontaneously links the natural, spiritual and human existences. They believe that one's well-being is dependent on the respectful relationship that exists between the living, the ancestors and the natural world. It is the *saya* that serves as a vital force to keep this interdependent network an organic entity. It is reflected in the way all Lohorung indigenous rituals are designed to restore the key relationship with the ancestors and raise *saya*. In this mission, the role of beer as an offering, as a medicine and an intoxicant is as central to raise the *saya* of the patient, the family and the community as it is to raising the *saya* of the ancestors.

## II. The *Malangs* and the Intoxicants

*Dabistan-I Madhahib*, a major work on the religions of India in seventeenth century by a Parsi describes the *malangs*, one of the Sufi sects in undivided Punjab, as wandering mendicants who go about nearly naked, , drink *bhang* in excess and always keep fire alive. The *malangs* are considered even today not only as dirty, illiterate and irreligious but also as drug addicts and social outcastes who continue with their practice of drinking *bhang* and smoking *charas* to experience the divine. Though most Muslims consider their practices to be in violation of *sharia*, they consider themselves to be on the right path. It is in the hashish-induced state of intoxication (*nasha*) that 'the *malang* enters into communion with God and receives the commands of Bari Imam whose servant they consider themselves to be. For them '*bhang* and *dhamal* (dance) are the source of communication with their *murshid*'.<sup>7</sup>

It may be shocking for an ordinary Muslim to accept their idea of intoxicating *bhang* as the path to God. But, in order to understand the *malang*'s use of *bhang*, we need to locate this practice against their worldview and Islamic philosophy. One of the Sufi manuals, i.e., *Suhrawardi's Kitab adab al-muridin*, while laying great emphasis on the importance of *adab* (proper conduct) for the spiritual development of a Sufi, explains it as a progression from the outer to the inner state.<sup>8</sup> The *adab* of the common man is different from that of the Sufi in that the latter is not a set of rules of behavior but a prescription concerning the relationship between the inner and the outer. But in his desire to seek communion with God, the Sufi cannot ignore or deviate from meticulous observance of the *sharia* (the Islamic law). Most of the Sufi schools believe that the external and the physical actions of a Sufi need to be in conformity with the law, so that they can easily serve as a proof for one's transformed internal state.

<sup>7</sup> Kathrine Ewing, "The *Malangs* of the Punjab: Intoxication or Adab as the Path to God?" in Metcalf ed., *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam*, <https://books.google.co.in/books?isbn=0520046609> (accessed on 27-7-2016).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 357

However, not all schools buy this view. One such school is *qualandars* who 'violate the premise at the most general level by ignoring or even deliberately disobeying the Sharia.'<sup>9</sup> The *Malangs* of Punjab belong to this school. Though the *malangs* are condemned by many people for their disgusting practices of drug-taking and failure to follow Sharia, they are a cohesive community with a well-defined worldview of their own. *Malangs* believe that their life is regulated and guided by *hukm* (commands, orders) which directly come from God or a *Pir* who requires their service. They do not walk on the beaten path of law but take a road less travelled. They do not operate within a bounded legal framework. Their life is not pre-programmed by *Sharia*. They depend on direct communication with God and structure their life's course accordingly in an open and non-regimented fashion. They act at the command of God, or of their *pirs* received in a dream. Their every action is said to involve a direct infusion of the sacred into everyday life. But to follow God's command, the *malang* has to completely abandon the ordinary men's world, be it material or social. 'He thus becomes utterly exterior vis-à-vis the social world in order to enter the inner, spiritual world. *Sharia* that is prescribed for the common men in the external world to show their submission to God is not considered applicable to the *malangs*, since they have relinquished the common social world. Even the *pirs* (the descendents of Mohammed and other holy people), who are married and having children are in the outer world but not the *malangs* who are celibates. Since the former are in the outer world, they require *Sharia* to order the outer world and to purify the body and the lower soul in accordance with God's commandments. In particular, even *pirs* require the *Sharia* as they have to make transition from the outer to the inner, so that contact with the divine is made possible for them.

Having deliberately rejected the social and the external world, the *malangs* do not need to make such a transition. Since they do not move in and out of the social world, they are simply focused on the inner, and perpetually seek to live in contact with the sacred. Having relinquished mundane world and married life, the *malangs* are

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 358



considered married to God, as displayed 'by the wearing of feminine ornaments, especially the bangles and rings and, in some cases of feminine clothing.'<sup>10</sup> The *malangs* are betrothed to God which is manifest in the iron bangle, a symbol of inseparable bond between the *malangs* and God, that cannot be broken, unlike in the case of wife who breaks her bangles after her husband's death.

A *malangi* gets his orders or a call to give up his worldly life and become a God's wife in a state of intoxication obtained through the smoking of hashish and drinking of bhang the use of which marks the *malang* as being outside respectable society and also clearly sets him apart from the *pirs*. While the use of intoxicants fetches disrespect for the *malangs* in the society, the *malangs* look at the common man's use of alcohol with contempt. "Alcohol works on the outside - it makes a man violent and binds his senses. *Charas* works in the inside. It makes him peaceful and opens up his spirit to God. So a *malang* should avoid alcohol as he should avoid woman. Alcohol will cut him off from God, but the *charas* will bring him close to God. That is why we *malangs* use it."<sup>11</sup>

The use of *bhang* helps to reinforce the idea that the external world, the outer man, is completely irrelevant and should be ignored. Once in a hashish-induced state of intoxication, the *malang* enters into communion with God and receives his command. While *pirs* bring the lower soul (*nafs*) under control through their strict observance of *Sharia*, the *malangs* 'strive to bring it under control by eliminating its autonomy.'<sup>12</sup> The *malang* attempts to eliminate independent action in the world. He binds his soul to the orders of God and of his *pir*, and in his state of intoxication, loses touch with his body altogether but gets access to the order of God or a *pir*. 'The *malangs* focus on giving up not only worldly possessions but also independent action, relying instead on the inner experience of God in a state of intoxication and on God's orders as the stimulus for action.'<sup>13</sup> While a saintly *pir* begins his spiritual journey from a position of activity in the world through the traditional

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 363

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 363.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 369

code of conduct prescribed by *sharia*, the *malang*, having abandoned the external world, begins from a position of inertia and inaction, the state of *nasha* (intoxication). It is in this intoxicated condition that he receives God's orders which become the motivating force of all his actions. His body and soul are entirely bound to God. Though he appears to be acting in the external world, it is not he who acts but God/*pirs* who act through him. He is only their agency. Hence both in theory and in practice, *sharia* is not necessary for the *malangs*. Their services are 'actions that need to be performed in order to maintain the channel of spiritual communication between God and man, via the dead saints and their shrines'<sup>14</sup>.

### Interpreting the Phenomena

To interpret the intoxicant-produced experiences of the divine and the supernatural, let us turn to Robert Orsi's idea of 'abundant events'. For Orsi, 'abundant events' refer to those experiences that occur at the edges of culture and self involving relationships (not only among living persons, but also between generations, between humans and saints), objects (like sacred plants, stones etc.), sense perceptions (like the touch of the sacred water/oil, smell of the incense and a vision of a deity's statue), special beings (like ancestors and gods) and their memory.<sup>15</sup> Abundant events draw our attention 'to the presence of the supernatural in relationship with humans and the power of the needs, fears, desires, and imaginings, conscious and unconscious, that this exchange unlocks.'<sup>16</sup> Abundant events like the *malang*'s communication with God or *pir* through a *bhang*-produced intoxicated situation or the revitalization of the *saya* of an ailing Loharung by establishing communication with the ancestors through rituals objects such as beer etc. may appear at first sight to be weird and uncanny

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 371

<sup>15</sup> Robert Orsi, "When  $2 + 2 = 5$ : Can we begin to think about unexplained religious experiences in ways that acknowledge their existence?" *The American Scholar*, 76/2 (Spring 2007): 34-43.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Orsi "Abundant History: Marian Apparition as Alternative History" *Historically Speaking*, 9/7 (September & October, 2008): 12-16, 15.

that lie beyond the narratives of authorized knowledge. According to Orsi, they are “the ‘more’ in William James’ perspective. Scholars like Dipesh Chakrabarty, Cardon also hold that the acceptance of abundant events as a site of the real ‘can help us inquire into human experiences and cultures that take seriously the existence, agency, and reality of the unseen.’<sup>17</sup> According to them, the failure of history to take seriously the deep cultural and religious experiences of the common folk as a valid domain of historical narrative is due to the fact that modernist project of history as a knowledge system is founded upon an idealized conception of the self ‘as fundamentally autonomous from other selves and from nature; a notion of self which is religious, perhaps, but disenchanted and able to separate “private” religious “beliefs” from the rest of one’s affairs and opinions; and, above all, rationalist.’<sup>18</sup> Hence, from modernist point of view, intoxicants - produced encounter of the *malangs* with God and of the Loharung with the dead ancestors are situations of ‘lack’ and cannot be accorded the status of the real. At best, they all can be ascribed to some form of social or psychological crisis, or they are to be understood as a fall-out of an irrational superstitious belief system. Hence they are not only insignificant and illegitimate, but have no right to exist at least for some people.

According to Orsi, ‘the identification and exploration of such events’<sup>19</sup> as real calls for an empiricism that ‘raises up to the powerful reality of nonexistent objects,’<sup>20</sup> (using psychoanalyst Ana-Maria Rizzuto’s phrase) and to take history to ‘its limits in order to make its unworking visible’<sup>21</sup> (employing Dipesh Chakrabarty idea). In the new project, it is necessary to ‘describe how the real finds presence, existence, and power, how it becomes as real’<sup>22</sup> as beer and *bhangs*.

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<sup>17</sup> Monica Black, “The Supernatural and the Poetics of History,” *The Hedgehog Review*, 13/3 (Fall 2011): 72-81, 73

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>19</sup> Robert Orsi, “2 + 2 = 5 or the Quest for Abundant Empiricism,” *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*, 1/6 (Spring, 2006): 113-121, 119.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Orsi, ‘When 2 + 2 = 5,’ 42.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Robert Orsi, ‘Quest for Abundant Empiricism,’ 119.

To quote Orsi, the real arises “inside, outside, and at the border” of cultures and its experiences of the supernatural. This empiricism is flexible ‘enough to conceptualize the intersection of realities’<sup>23</sup> normally constructed ‘as dichotomies, such as self/other, past/present, the imaginary/the real.’<sup>24</sup> In abundant empiricism, ‘The world precedes the subject so that (s)he finds it as real already in the relationships that form her/him and that connect him/her to culture and culture to him/her; (s)he takes hold of the real for herself/himself in the company of the figures her/his culture gives her/him or that (s)he makes or finds.’<sup>25</sup>

## Conclusion

What intoxicants have brought about in both these instances are abundant events that establish communication with the supernatural to overcome the exigencies of life in one case and to be of service to God and his people in another. In the case of the Lohorungs, the means they have employed to bring about abundant event is ‘cultural’ i.e., commonly shared tribal strategy which seeks to tackle the issues of the community and its members in a conventional and consensual way. But, in the case of the *malangs*, their use of the intoxicants is perceived ‘counter-cultural’ in sense it defies the existing dominant norms, social ethos and cultural practices of the larger Muslim community, though to the *malang* in-group, what they do is in perfect compliance with their philosophy of religious life. Both the entheogens-generated religious experiences are non-events to a modernist mind that refuses to see the real beyond its epistemological boundaries. But for a Lohorung or a *malang*, they are indeed significantly ‘abundant events’ that produce transcendental experiences which may defy rational epistemological framework but certainly admit the inalienable relationship between the human, the divine and the cosmic as in the case of the Lohorung, or the unbreakable bond between the commanding divine and the serving humans as in the case of the *malangs*.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.



# **Intoxicants in Human Life and Society: Some Biblical Perspectives**

**Maria Arul Raja**

The multiple perspectives of the stand of the Bible towards intoxicants could be spelt out as follows: 1) Culture of Celebration and Restoration, 2) Matter of Censure and Denunciation, 3) Occasion for Discernment and Judgment, 4) Means for Healing and Recovery. The addiction to chemicals like alcohol, tobacco or marijuana has been recognized for many years by professional medical organizations as a primary, chronic, and progressive disease eventually leading to pre-mature death. Even as a disease, it drives the victim into disarray with psycho-social destruction and politico-cultural devastation leading to moral chaos and spiritual disorder. In this context some Biblical perspectives have been identified in the spiritual praxis of the Alcoholic Anonymous in terms of conversion, reconciliation, surrender, and spreading the good news of freedom. God's redemptive embrace of the human world keeps on leading the broken humanity from the culture of addiction to the culture of recovery. Such an inter-textual engagement between the Bible and the world of the addicts could create a new addiction-free society. The author Dr Maria Arul Raja SJ is Scripture Professor at the Jesuit Regional Theologate, Arul Kadal, Chennai.

## **1.0 Intoxicants and Bible: Multiple Perspectives**

In the Biblical world, we come across a wide spectrum of attitudes and approaches to the reality of the intoxicants in human life and society. At one extreme is a romantic glorification of the value of inebriated escapism; on the other, moralistic condemnation and nihilistic despair. But in between we encounter the persuasive invitation for careful abstinence from the evil influences of intoxicants killing the spirit of genuine discernment and sound ethics.

While dealing with the intoxicants in human life and society, we need to understand what the 'culture of addiction'<sup>1</sup> means. This culture consists of patterns of perceiving, thinking, feeling, and behaving towards increased use of excessive and dependent use of the substance leading to addiction. Many factors seem to be at work in a person to cause alcoholism or substance dependence.<sup>2</sup> One may know brilliant explanations relating to neuro pathways and habit patterns of the addiction to alcohol. However, unless the spiritual blindness is removed by the touch of God, the dependence on the chemicals of one's choice will continue to persist.<sup>3</sup> The crucial matter for every addict is the journey from the culture of addiction to the culture of recovery. In this process of recovery, the engagement of the addicts (to Alcohol, narcotics, sex etc.,) with the Biblical word can be a spiritual path to tread.

### ***1.1 Culture of Celebration and Restoration***

In the Last Supper and the celebration of Eucharist, wine occupies a central place. In fact Jesus is portrayed as quite at home with wine both in his very first miracle at Cana and even with his table fellowship with the ordinary folk. The culture of genuine solidarity of Jesus with the crowds of the impoverished people (*ochlos* and *ptochoi*)<sup>4</sup> was

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. William L. White, *Pathways from the Culture of Addiction to the Culture of Recovery: A Travel Guide for Addiction Professionals* (Center City: Hazelden, 1990); Cf. John Booth Davies, *The Myth of Addiction: An Application of the Psychological Theory of Attribution to Illicit Drug Use* (Philadelphia: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Charles L. White, *Alcoholism, Attachments and Spirituality: A Transpersonal Approach* (East Rutherford: Thomas W. Perrin, 1985).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Roy Barkley, *The Catholic Alcoholic* (Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1990); John Behnke, *90 Days-One Day at a Time: A New Beginning for People in Recovery* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999); John T. Catoir, *God Delights in You: An Introduction to Gospel Spirituality* (Bombay: St. Paul Press, 1994- 2<sup>nd</sup> impression); John Doe, *The Golden Book of the Spiritual Side* (Indianapolis: SMT Guild, Inc., 1947); William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990).

<sup>4</sup> The unorganized masses and the disowned crowds of the marginalized folk with imposed cultural inferiority and chronic sickness caused by perennial malnutrition.

looked down upon by the religio-cultural elite condemning his eating and drinking with the sinful. "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds" (Mat 11:19).

Strong drink could enliven those perishing and even make them forget their bitter experience of impoverishment and abandonment (Prov 31:6-7). The wine heartens the humans with brilliant face and delightful heart (Ps 104: 14-15; Eccl 10:17). In fact, a Church leader (Timothy) is instructed by another Church leader (Paul) to make use of wine for medical purposes. "No longer drink only water, but take a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments" (1 Tim 5:23).

## ***1.2 Matter of Censure and Denunciation***

But stern moralists with puritanical persuasions have highlighted the Biblical stand condemning the moral evil of drunkenness. "Do not be among the wine bibbers, or among gluttonous eaters of meat; for the drunkard and glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe them with rags." (Prov 23: 20-21) The use of alcohol for oneself or for others for inebriating purposes has been counted as harmful as it impairs moral judgment and ethical discernment (Isa 5:11, 22). The same is construed as curse for its arousal of brawls and scuffles among the neighbours (Prov 20:1; Hab 2:15). The habit of drunkenness and slavery of addiction is condemned without any ambiguity since they can cause loss of human integrity and character (Tob 4:15; Eccl 10:17) and increase anger and become abominable curse (Sir 31:30; Jer 13:13; Ezek 23:33). One has to be on his guard against drunkenness leading to dissipation and licentiousness (Lk 21:34; Rom 13:13; Eph 5:18). The evil of drunkenness along with other vices will distance the humans from the Reign of God (Gal 5:21; 1 Pet 2:11; 4:3).<sup>5</sup> In view of building an effectively abstemious community under discipline, Paul counsels all age groups (aged men, aged women, young women, and young men) as follows:

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Frederic Richard Lees and Dawson Burns, *The Temperance Bible-Commentary: Version, Criticism, and Exposition on all 'Wine' and 'Strong Drink'* (New York: Sheldon & Co and National Temperance Society and Publication House, 1870).

Tell the older men to be temperate, serious, prudent, and sound in faith, in love, and in endurance. Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled (Titus 2:2-6).

### ***1.3 Occasion for Discernment and Judgment***

It is true that it is for freedom that every believer is set free by Christ (Gal 5:1) and with the culture of *agape* all things are lawful (1 Cor 6:12). And though drinking wine or doing anything else may not be intrinsically sinful, it could be a sin when becoming a stumbling block to the weak brethren (cf. Rom 14: 14-21). Further, if the short-term or long-term consumption of alcohol or other intoxicants destroy the human health, then it amounts to the destruction of the human body which is the Temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:9). One has to be vigilant from the influence of the tempting devils (1 Pet 5:8) with the purity of the heart and of the body (Mt 5:8).

When divine will/ law/ expectation and human will/ law/ expectation are in conflict with each other, the divine perspectives have to be well-discerned, meticulously identified and loyally followed (Acts 5:27-29; 15:3-9). God does not want the humans to be extinguished in the absence of discernment; rather the divine desire is that the humans flourish with discerning choices towards abundant life (Deut 30:15-20; Isa 1:18-20; Jn 10:10). Anything that takes away one's inner peace, harmony and soberness is harmful to his or her physical, mental, psychological and spiritual health; it leads to to "eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence" (Prov 4:17, 23; 1 Thess 5:22).

### ***1.4 Means for Healing and Recovery***

Addiction to chemicals like alcohol, tobacco or marijuana has been recognized since many years by professional medical organizations as a primary, chronic, and progressive disease eventually leading to



premature death.<sup>6</sup> Even as a disease, it throws the victim into disarray with psycho-social destruction, politico-cultural devastation,<sup>7</sup> moral chaos and spiritual disorder.<sup>8</sup>

Accordingly, those who are addicted to alcohol are portrayed with the following characteristics: arrogance with blood-shot eyes, confusion with forgetfulness, impoverishment both in health and wealth, slothfulness with insensitivity and stupor (Isa 19:14; 28:7-8; 29:9; Jer. 25:27; 51:39; Hos 4:11; Hab 2:5; Job 12:25; Prov 23: 20-29; 31:4-7, 31, 35). Amidst these negative aspects of life, the humans are called upon to choose the path of wisdom (Eph 5:15-16) in tune with the holiness of Christ's life (1 Cor 16:15; Heb 7:26; 1 Jn 2:6). By way of belonging to God, one has to be freed from the negative aspects of the world in order to lead a productive and fruitful life (Lk 8:14; Jn 17:16; Rom 12:2; 1 Jn 2:15). Those who implicitly or explicitly seek the healing and recovery from addiction in the light of Biblical spirituality will let the Spirit act against the spirit (*Spiritus contra spiritu, bam*) Yes, the grip of the spirit of alcohol or other intoxicants on the addicted has to

<sup>6</sup> Cf. John Doe, *The Golden Book of Sanctity* (Indianapolis: SMT Guild, 1967); Terence T. Gorski, *The Staying Sober: Instruction Manual- Work Book* (Missouri: Independence Press, 1988); Lee L. Jampolski, *Healing the Addictive Mind: Freeing Yourself from addictive Patterns and Relationships* (Berkeley: Celestial Arts, 1991); Joseph L. Kellerman, *Reconciliation with God and Family* (Center City: Hazelden, 1976).

<sup>7</sup> The growing rates of motor accidents, physical attacks, sexual aberrations, domestic violence and child abuse are attributed to addiction to drugs and alcohol besides several forms of cancer, liver cirrhosis, other forms of infectious diseases. In human society intoxicants seem to be the cause of divorce, infidelity, unplanned pregnancies leading to higher abortion rate. The heaps of money spent on alcohol lead to the growing impoverishment, bankruptcy or credit problems of the parents abandoning their own kids.

<sup>8</sup> Alcoholics Anonymous, *Came to Believe: The Spiritual Adventure of A.A. as Experienced by Individual Members* (New York; AA-World Services, Inc., 2006- 4<sup>th</sup> Printing- India); Friends in Recovery, *The Twelve Steps: A Spiritual Journey* (San Diego: Recovery Publications, 1988); Herb K., *Twelve-Step Guide to Using the Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book* (Palos Verdes: Capizon Publishing, 2005- 2<sup>nd</sup> printing).

be overcome with the Spirit of the living God.<sup>9</sup> And accordingly the struggle between the good Spirit and evil spirit is interpreted through the categories of intra-personal conflict (Rom 7:14-25) and the primordial conflict between the Spirit Vs. the Flesh (Gal 5:16-26).

The struggles of the recovering alcoholic are intertextualized with the events of the passion of Christ in the Gospels<sup>10</sup> in the following manner:

- The Agony in the Garden: Agony of surveying one's own sinful past
- The Scourging at the Pillar: Torture of encountering one's naked self before the Creator
- The Crowning with Thorns: Pain of identifying one's inordinate attachments
- The Carrying of the Cross: Depression of repeated relapses in every recovery process
- The Crucifixion: Surrendering everything to God

## 2.0 Dialogue Between the Alcoholic Anonymous and the Biblical World

The twelve steps in the Alcoholic Anonymous recovery process could be supported by Biblical insights.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Charles Knippel, *Samuel M. Shoemaker's Theological Influence of William G. Wilson's Twelve Steps Spiritual Program of Recovery*, Ph.D. Dissertation, (St. Louis University, 1987). Also cf. <http://alcoholicsvictorious.org/12-steps> browsed on September 08, 2016; <http://www.nacr.org/living-free/chapter-2-the-twelve-steps-and-their-relationship-to-christianity> browsed on September 11, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Bill Stelling, *A Guest House Journal: A Priest's Personal Journal during Alcoholic Recovery* (Memphis: Eagle Wing Books, Inc., 2003): 53-54; Michele S. Matteo, *The 12 Steps in the Bible: A Path to Wholeness for Adult Children* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991); Bill Pitmann, *The 12 Step Prayer Book* (Seattle: Glen Abbey Books, 1990).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Alcoholics Anonymous, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* -58<sup>th</sup> Printing (New York: AA- World Services, Inc., 1998); *Alcoholics Anonymous* -4<sup>th</sup> edition (New York: AA World Services, Inc., 2001); Alcoholics Anonymous, *Living Sober: Some Methods A.A. Members have Used for Not Drinking* (New York: AA-World Services, Inc., 2002- 4<sup>th</sup> Printing- India).

S. No	12- Steps of the AA in Search of Genuine Recovery	Some Biblical Texts Resonating with the AA Spiritual Search
1.	<i>We admitted we were power less over alcohol ... that our lives had become unmanageable.</i>	"I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out." (Rom 7:18)
2.	<i>Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.</i>	"... my grace is sufficient for you, for my POWER is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor 12:9); "For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose." (Phil 2:13)
3.	<i>Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of GOD as we understood Him.</i>	"... If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." (Lk 9:23) "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—which is your spiritual worship." (Rom 12:1)
4.	<i>Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.</i>	"Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord." (Lam 3:40)
5.	<i>Admitted to GOD, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.</i>	"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." (Jam 5:16)
6.	<i>Were entirely ready to have GOD remove all these defects of character.</i>	"If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land." (Isa 1:19)
7.	<i>Humbly asked Him to remove all our shortcomings.</i>	"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up." (Jam 4:10)

8.	<i>Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.</i>	"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift." (Mt 5:23-24); "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 Jn 1:9)
9.	<i>Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.</i>	"Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Lk 6:31); Give and it shall be given you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Lk 6:38)
10.	<i>Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.</i>	"For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith GOD has given you." (Rom 12:3)
11.	<i>Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with GOD as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will, and the power to carry that out.</i>	"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer" (Ps 19:14); "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God." (Col 3:16)
12.	<i>Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and practice these principles in all our affairs.</i>	"My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal 6:1-2)



In this simple inter-textual engagement between the perspectives of the Twelve Steps of the Alcoholic Anonymous and some aspects of the Biblical world we come across the following insights:

- God's redemptive embrace of the human world keeps on good-news-ing the humanity and moving it from brokenness to fullness.
- Genuine admission of human limitations and surrender to the higher power of God leads the contrite heart to the gripping experience of love, compassion, and forgiveness.
- Humility is the key virtue for enabling the Spirit of God to permit the salvific intervention of the Creator God into the life of the addict.
- The culture of on-going conversion with relentless confession of one's sinful attitudes, outlooks, actions and habits will ensure the appropriate behaviour with the Creator, the other co-humans and the entire world of creation including the intoxicants.
- This will give credibility to the recovering addict towards a new way of life with self-esteem and celebration of others with new dignity.
- Habitual surrender to the divine power through the regular rhythms of conscious spiritual practices with the growing culture of self-critique will keep on liberating the addicts from the inordinate attachment towards the intoxicants.
- The joy of liberation from the evil of addiction should be happily announced from the roof-tops for the benefit of many with evangelical ripples till the end of the world.

### **3.0 Going Beyond Individualistic Salvation**

The dialogue between the world of the addicts and the world of the Bible cannot be simply satisfied merely with the engagement with the interior movements and the personal struggles of the addicts in their recovery process. This dialogue has to widen the horizons of communitarian outlook towards uprooting the slavish culture of addiction from the human soil. The following Biblical inspirations could deepen such pursuits in an empowering manner:

- Never become slave and never enslave others (both Exodus-event and Jesus-event)
- Inordinate attachment to anything leads to the violence of the integrity of creation (Original Sin and violations of the Divine Commandments)
- The centrality of God necessitates the centrality of the celebration of the God-given dignity of the impoverished and the marginalized (Prophetic Annunciations and Denunciations).
- The universal salvation is performed through the Salvation of the Least (Option for the Marginalized)
- Along with personal sins the Structural (Communitarian) Sins are to be encountered with the power of Divine Grace (Magnitude of Sins and Abundance of Grace).
- In the Journey from the 'heaven-and-earth' towards the 'new-heavens-and-new-earth' the culture of righteous compassion keeps on generating sustaining hope (Hesed- Emet- Sedeq of the Biblical God).

### 3.1 *Fighting against the Culture of Addiction*

According to a commonly held view, addiction is due to arrogance of the affluent, or lethargy of the middle class or the frustration of the depressed. Many of the teen agers have been informally educated to wait for their turn to seek the pleasures from intoxicants. Such unhealthy tendencies are to be dealt only with an outright rejection of the evil with no compromise at all following the manner Jesus responded to is the triple temptations (Lk 4:1-13). With intoxicants, many are orphaned, widowed and even alienated from their true selves. . Such people are to be accompanied with motherly compassion blended with prophetic admonitions after the model of the pedagogy of Yahweh in making the non-community of the *Hapiru*-s (unorganized labourers) into the organized community of the Israelites with the dignity of sovereignty.

The void created by materialist and consumerist tendencies lead to sexual objectification and exploitation of the voiceless. Such personal sins are aggravated by the systemic sins of structural lust for power and passion for indulgences. At this juncture not only the consumption

but the entire network of production, distribution, and trafficking of the intoxicants are to be uprooted with the collaboration with all people of good will. This is another form of removing both the personal and the structural sins of addiction killing the life of the community. In this way those who engage themselves in the dialogue between the world of the addicts and the world of the Bible could create a new addiction-free society: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free.' (Lk 4:18)

# Missionaries Confronting Intoxicants

**D. Arthur Jeyakumar**

The question 'did the missionaries get involved in dealing with intoxicants?' is one which has not been studied in depth. In fact almost none of the books on History of Christianity in India, used as text books in Protestant Theological Seminaries make any mention of it. This paper is limited in scope. The word 'Intoxicants' can include liquor, opium, drugs etc. In view of certain limitations, this paper will deal with the practice of liquor consumption and that too in India only. It highlights the efforts of the Protestant Missionaries in India in temperance activities from about the early decades of nineteenth century to the beginning of twentieth century. The Temperance Movement was mostly a lay movement; it was not an officially organized movement of the Church. It is considered as a social movement with religious overtones against the consumption of alcoholic beverages. It criticized excessive alcohol consumption and promoted complete abstinence (teetotalism). Further, it used its political influence to press the government to enact alcohol laws to regulate the availability of alcohol or even its complete prohibition. Its aim was to protect the working class as well as women. Dr Arthur Jeyakumar is visiting Professor, History of Christianity in the Department of Christian Studies, University of Madras. Formerly, teaching at the Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary, Arasaradi, Madurai (1975-2009), and Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Chennai-10 (2009-2014).

## Historical and Social Context

The word 'Temperance' means moderation (Latin: *temperantia*). It also means a) self-discipline / restraint of natural appetites and passions and b) total abstinence from or moderation in consumption of intoxicating liquors. For the Christian, it is linked to the need for self-control of the body, regarded as the 'Temple of the Holy Spirit'. Some background information is necessary to understand the involvement of Christian



Missions in temperance programmes. The rise of German Pietism under the leadership of Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) sowed the seeds of temperance since Spener emphasized spiritual transformation through moderation in food, dress and consumption of liquor. The Moravian Church, a product of German Pietism, sowed the seeds of temperance in its mission fields.

The Great Awakening in the American Colonies (1725-1760) and the eighteenth century Evangelical Revival in England due to the ministry of John Wesley and his co-workers led to the formation of missionary societies among Protestant Christians of all denominations, which sent missionaries to the trading centres of the British East India Company in Asia and Africa. They regarded the human body as the “Temple of the Holy Spirit” and so took not only the Gospel to those parts of the world but also the Temperance Movement.

### **Temperance Movement: Origins and Growth**

The first one, the American Temperance Society (ATS) was formed in 1826 during the American Revolution to ban whiskey distilling. It started from Connecticut, and then spread to Virginia and New York State. Soon it expanded to eight other States, advocating temperance rather than abstinence. ATS claimed to have more than 8000 local groups within twelve years. There were others who stayed away from drinking, since the alcohol duty was used to finance the American Civil War.

In the 1860s, the evangelical Christians in the USA began to express their social concern in taking large scale efforts to control the production and use of alcoholic beverages. As a result, ‘the Women’s Christian Temperance Union’ (WCTU) came into being. It was initially guided by one Ms. Frances E. Willard (1839-1898), a Methodist Teacher. She was a collaborator with the American Evangelist and revival preacher D.L. Moody “who looked upon temperance as the most important means of protecting women, children and the urban poor from the vagaries of modern industrial society.”<sup>1</sup> The WCTU soon became

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<sup>1</sup> Mark A. Noll, “Christian America and Christian Canada”, in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Vol.8, World Christianities C.1815-C.1914*, edited by Sheridan Gilley and Brian Stanley, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 370.

international because of colonialism and of missionary societies. The 'Anti-Saloon League' was another organisation that was established in Ohio in 1893.

The first British organisation that promoted temperance was the 'Glasgow and West of Scotland Temperance Society' formed in 1829. In Belfast, Rev. John Eager, a Professor of Theology and an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland wrote on August 14, 1829 a letter to the *Belfast Telegraph* publicising his views on temperance. To put his views in practice he formed with the other like-minded Presbyterian clergy 'the Ulster Temperance Movement'. Then in 1833, 'Teetotalism', a movement for total abstinence from alcohol, originated in Preston, England. 'The Band of Hope' with a focus on the Working class and their children was founded in Leeds by Rev. Jabez Tunncliffe. In 1855 a national organisation, 'the United Kingdom Alliance' was formed with the aim of prohibiting sale of alcohol, through a law similar to the Maine Law in the US. It held meetings in Churches and campaigned politically for the curtailment of the influence of pubs and breweries. Moreover, it organised rallies, demonstrations and marches in order to get the support of as many people as possible who would sign a pledge owing allegiance to the Alliance and resolve to abstain from all liquors of an intoxicating nature except as medicine. In 1876 the British Women's Temperance Association was formed to persuade men to stop drinking. In Wales, Lady Llanover, motivated by Calvinistic Methodists teachings, closed all the public houses in her estate and she was an outspoken critic of the evils of drinking.

As a result of the above laity-inspired temperance activities, Churches too began to get involved officially. In the second half of the nineteenth century, English Non-conformists identified themselves with the Temperance Movement. Methodists, Quakers and the Salvation Army lobbied the Parliament to restrict alcohol sales. The Church of England Temperance Society was founded in 1862 and it enabled its congregations to form temperance groups. In 1864 the Salvation Army was founded and it laid strong emphasis on abstinence from alcohol as

its ministry was concentrated on the working class.<sup>2</sup> 'The United Kingdom Alliance' brought members of many different Churches together for this common cause. From the 1860s, ministers in London and other large industrial towns developed the same kind of temperance groups within their congregations as the Church of England. They were also prepared to campaign for various kinds of social legislation in Parliament".<sup>3</sup>

In the Roman Catholic Church, the temperance movement got started when the Irish priest Theobald Mathew established the 'Teetotal Abstinence Society' in 1838. We hear of the 'League of the Cross' a Catholic total abstinence organization founded by Cardinal Manning in 1873. In 1898 James Cullen, an Irish Catholic formed the 'Pioneer Total Abstinence Association', and it spread to other English-speaking communities. A guild/sodality named 'Association of the Cross' or 'Temperance Guild of our Lady and St. John the Baptist' was formed to combat alcoholism from a distinctively Roman Catholic angle.<sup>4</sup>

In spite of the above mentioned efforts, there was a wide spread addiction to strong drinks especially among the working class, which affected the progress of voluntary religion. "The consumption of alcohol rose steadily down to late in the century (19<sup>th</sup>) and the number of drink outlets, whether in metropolitan bars or in frontier saloons, were legion. The public place (pub) was a centre of male sociability, sustaining a web of values that fostered gambling, tolerated swearing and admired a manliness that could express itself in violence. The Temperance Movement, though originating outside the Churches, were however,

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<sup>2</sup> At present, the Salvation Army is said to be in 126 countries and continues to require its members to refrain from drinking alcohol as well as smoking, taking illegal drugs and gambling.

<sup>3</sup> David M. Thompson, "The Social Thought of the Protestant Churches", in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Vol.8, World Christianities C.1815-C.1914*, edited by Sheridan Gilley and Brian Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006):158.

<sup>4</sup> Mary Heimann, "Catholic Revivalism in Worship and Devotion", in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Vol.8, World Christianities C.1815-C.1914*, edited by Sheridan Gilley and Brian Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 72.

coopted by them. They banned alcohol from their events, provided organisations such as the 'Band of Hope' to train the young in the dangers of drink and sponsored counter-attractions such as coffee-taverns...The endorsement of total abstinence erected a barrier between the Free Churches and many of their potential converts."<sup>5</sup>

### Missionaries and Temperance

The British East India Company (B.E.I.Co.), a private company, was meant for trade and for profit. Though it began its commercial activity in India from the beginning of 17<sup>th</sup> century, it expanded its activities phenomenally all over Asia and Africa especially in the eighteenth century. Yet it did not permit Christian missionaries in its areas. Then the 'Evangelicals' in England, took steps through the Parliament to make the B.E.I.Co., open its trading centres for missionary activities. As a result, the British Parliament made provisions for missionary activities in the charter of the B.E.I.Co., when it came for renewal in 1813. Initially, missionary societies from UK only were given such permission, but the 1833 Charter renewal expanded it to missionaries from other countries too.<sup>6</sup> This happened not only in India but also in other countries where B.E.I.Co., had established trading centres.

The unethical practises adopted by the B.E.I.Co., in its commercial activities came in for severe criticism even in Britain. One of its practises which came to be criticised was the introduction of intoxicants into the non-Christian lands, which had become a curse in the society, since it destroyed the character of the person, affected his finances and turned that person into a centre of demoralising influences.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the missionaries began to encounter the problem of intoxicants.

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<sup>5</sup> David Babbington, "The Growth of Voluntary Religion", in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Vol.8, World Christianities C.1815-C.1914*, edited by Sheridan Gilley and Brian Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 66.

<sup>6</sup> D. Arthur Jeyakumar, *History of Christianity in India: Selected Themes* (New Delhi: ISPCK, 2002), (reprinted in 2016).

<sup>7</sup> James S. Dennis, *Christian Missions and Social Progress: A Sociological Study of Foreign Missions*, Vol. II (Edinburgh / and London: Oliphant Anderson and Ferrier, 1899), (hereafter Dennis, Social Progress)



Many missionaries who came to India seemed to have had the impact of the temperance activities in their native places before they came out as missionaries, and so they were able to begin the same in their place of work. As per a report of 1873, 1000 of the 34000 Protestant clergy in the British Isles were total abstainers.<sup>8</sup> The number of such clergy termed as 'water drinkers' grew considerably in the following years; more than half of the Presbyterian clergy, a third of all Wesleyan ministers and a majority of the Non-Conformists had come under this category. Those 'water drinkers' seemed to have had an impact on those who went out as missionaries. Thomas Evans, a BMS missionary took the decision to use his ability for the cause of temperance after witnessing his father's 'frightening and uncontrollable bouts of drunkenness'.<sup>9</sup> He had quite a long period of missionary work, mainly in North India which enabled him to be an instrument in forming not only the Anglo-Indian Temperance societies between 1888 and 1893, but also in developing indigenous temperance movements.<sup>10</sup> There were others who after witnessing scenes of drunkenness in their native places were converted to the temperance cause. For example, the Rev. Buchanan Blake of Free Church of Scotland who worked as a missionary in Western India; the Rev. H.M.M. Hackett of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), in Benares and Allahabad; and the Rev. W.H. Campbell of the London Missionary Society (LMS), at Cuddapah, Madras Presidency.

The Protestant missionaries who came to India soon realised that drunkenness had spread rapidly in certain parts of the country, posing a serious problem to the society. The locals had also taken note of this,

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<sup>8</sup> Longmate Norman, "The Water Drinkers: A History of Temperance" (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1968): 188, cited in Geoffrey A. Oddie, *Social Protest in India: British Protestant Missionaries and Social Reform 1850-1900* (New Delhi: Ramesh Jain for Manohar Publications, 1979): 194 (hereafter Oddie, **Social Protest**)

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Evans, "South Wales b. 1826 arrived India 1855, spent most of his time in the North West Province, Allahabad 1867-1873, Monghyr 1875-1885, Retired in 1885", in Oddie, *Social Protest*, 194 f.n.3 and 4

<sup>10</sup> Oddie, *Social Protest*, 215-218.

and so they began petitioning to the government. For example, 'natives of various caste and classes', European merchants, chaplains and missionaries presented a petition to the Governor of Bombay in November 1849. They complained that "previous to the establishment of English rule, the Marathi country was inhabited by a comparatively temperate people, but since then, intemperance has increased at an alarming rate, and is still rapidly spreading. Liquor shops are yearly being opened where formerly none existed, and intemperance threatens soon to number its victims in the smallest and most distant villages of the land".<sup>11</sup> Similar petitions drawing attention to the spread of intemperance and complaining of the government's encouragement of the liquor trade were presented in Poona (Pune), Calcutta (Kolkata), Madras city (Chennai). The Madras city petition/complaint referred to the conditions as follows: "We remember the time when one arrack shop was scarcely to be found within a mile from another, and a drunken native was a sort of curiosity; now such shops are not only to be found in almost every street, but four or five are frequently to be seen in every street; while on the high roads in places remote from native habitations, toddy pots are ranged under the hedges in front of wretched cocoa leaf hovels".<sup>12</sup>

In 1852 Missionaries assembled for the Calcutta Missionary Conference in 1852 and for the Madras Missionary Conference in 1853 sent petitions to the British Parliament expressing their concern about the spread and increase of the evils of intemperance as well. They also pointed out the connivance of Indian Presidency governments in the sale of alcoholic drinks.<sup>13</sup> Their concern was based on what they had witnessed in the course of their ministry. An observation made in 1847 by one Rev. James Mitchell of the Free Church of Scotland at Poona is worth mentioning. He said, "the drunkard can neither be a good husband, nor a good wife; a good son nor a good daughter;

<sup>11</sup> "Bombay Temperance Repository" (January 1852): 11-15, cited in Oddie, *Social Protest*, 195-196

<sup>12</sup> "Bombay Temperance Repository" (April 1852): 99, cited in Oddie, *Social Protest*, 197

<sup>13</sup> Oddie, *Social Protest*, 197

a good neighbour nor a good subject; a good magistrate nor a good master. He violates every relationship of life. The ills which he inflicts on all connected with him are unutterable".<sup>14</sup> According to the missionaries, the use of intoxicants led to serious crimes as well as to poverty, insanity and disease.

### Missionary Initiatives

So the missionaries began to establish temperance organisations after the model they knew in their native countries in the West. "Following the pattern of temperance reforms overseas, the missionaries not only sought to change government policy and restrict drinking facilities, but also aimed at educating public opinion on the evils of drink and promoting temperate habits among the people".<sup>15</sup>

The first initiative came from the missionaries belonging to the Bombay Missionary Union. As early as 1832, being disturbed by the government's excise laws and the spread of liquor consumption, they passed a resolution stating that it was "the duty of all Christians in India to promote and encourage the cause of temperance societies".<sup>16</sup> After a few years, the Bombay Temperance Union was founded by Rev. R.A Hume, an American missionary. It became a role model for the establishment of temperance movements in the Bombay Presidency.<sup>17</sup> In 1847, 'the Poona Association for the promotion of temperance on Christian Principles' was established by Rev. James Mitchell of the Scottish Presbyterian mission and a few others. In South India, the Madras Temperance Society, instituted in 1836 and the South Indian Temperance Union established in 1838 were conducted chiefly by British and American missionaries.<sup>18</sup> The Calcutta Temperance Society was founded by some of the missionaries in Bengal

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<sup>14</sup> "Bombay Temperance Repository" (January 1854): 370, cited in Oddie, *Social Protest*, 198

<sup>15</sup> Oddie, *Social Protest*, 200

<sup>16</sup> G. Smith, "The Life of John Wilson", 134, cited in Oddie, *Social Protest*, 200

<sup>17</sup> Dennis, *Social Progress*, 119

<sup>18</sup> "The Madras Almanac and Compendium of Intelligence for 1851, Madras", cited in Oddie, *Social Protest*, 201

including Revds. Alexander Duff (Church of Scotland Mission), Gogerly (LMS), Boaz (LMS), Innes (CMS), James Long (CMS) together with a few Europeans to advocate the propriety and necessity of abstaining wholly from the use of ardent spirits, and of being scrupulously and systematically temperate in the use of all liquors".<sup>19</sup>

British and other missionaries continued their Temperance work, organizing and developing additional societies. One such was in Berhampur named 'Berhampur Total Abstinence Society' which was established by the Rev.W.B.Philips (LMS) in 1876, and it was an inclusive one to benefit Christians, Hindus and Muslims.<sup>20</sup>

The Baptist missionaries organized Temperance societies specifically for the Baptist Christians. The Baptist Missionary Total Abstinence Association was formed in 1876 "to promote the cause of temperance amongst the churches and congregations connected with the Baptist Denomination in India".<sup>21</sup> Other Protestant communions too began to organize branches in various parts of the land. The Church of England Temperance Society too formed branches.

In South India, the Canadian Baptist missionaries especially the Rev. John Craig made their people to write petitions to the Government, for closing of liquor shops in various villages. At Ongole which was the American Baptist Missionary Union field, there was a Christian Temperance League, and the Mission insisted upon total abstinence. Rev. Chamberlain of the American Arcot Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church of America stated in 1895 that its mission field was a total abstinence society; missionaries who join it as well as the native assistants who entered it as employees needed to take a pledge of total abstinence. The Gossner Mission among the Kols reported that although drunkenness had not entirely disappeared, yet about 85% of Christians avoided all use of intoxicants.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> "The Calcutta Christian Observer" ( an organ of the Calcutta Missionary Conference) Vol. X (April 1841): 232-6, cited in Oddie, *Social Protest*, 201

<sup>20</sup> Oddie, *Social Protest*, 202

<sup>21</sup> "Christian Spectator", Vol. 5. No.56 (February 1876; March 1876): 332-3, cited in Oddie, *Social Protest*, 202

<sup>22</sup> Dennis, *Social Progress*, 119-120



In Assam (the composite State in the North East India) the missionaries of the American Baptist Missionary Union had waged a very successful campaign against intoxicants. In all their churches and in many of the villages where Christians resided, total abstinence was the rule. The Rev. Robert Evans of Mawphlang reported that thousands of Christians in his churches (Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church) refrained from liquor altogether and their children were brought up without knowing the taste of it.

In higher educational institutions, such as St. John's College (CMS) Agra, 'Students' Temperance Associations' had come into existence.<sup>23</sup>

We read of a beginning made among the army men to promote abstinence. In 1862, the Rev. J.G. Gelson (BMS, Agra) founded the Soldiers Total Abstinence Association. In the beginning there were only thirty seven army men who had abstained from taking spirituous liquor. "However, after three years, Gelson's association had branch societies in most regiments and, when he retired in about 1887, there were then more than 12000 total abstainers among British soldiers stationed in the country".<sup>24</sup>

Did every Christian missionary join the effort? Was every missionary an abstainer? We cannot come out with a clear-cut view on the issue since it is mentioned occasionally in some reports that in the 1860s missionaries still drank wine at weddings and on certain other occasions, and many of the other missionaries in South India even during the 1870s were said to be critical of the idea of total abstinence.

### **Tools used for Promotion of Temperance**

Those missionaries who advocated Temperance adopted different methods to promote it. They organized public meetings, rallies, marches, and the like. They gave impetus to locals, especially the educated and influential Indians to found Temperance societies. For example, the

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<sup>23</sup> Dennis, *Social Progress*, 120

<sup>24</sup> Oddie, *Social Protest*, 202, citing "On Guard", Vol. I., 2-3; Indian Mirror, 19 July 1887

Bengal Temperance Society was founded by Prof. Peary Churn Sircar of the Calcutta Presidency College. It had Keshub Chandra Sen, Kristo Das Pal, and Vidyasagar as members of its business committee in 1873.<sup>25</sup>

The missionaries produced a considerable amount of *temperance literature*. "Between 1840 and 1891, the Protestant missionary press alone published tracts and handbills and books on the subject in at least ten different vernacular languages as well as in English. These publications were designed to attract a wide variety of readers. They varied considerable in size and style and included poems in Tamil, Malayalam and English. An indication of the extent to which some of this literature was distributed can be gleaned from the fact that 80000 copies of one tract in Bengali were issued by the Calcutta Tract and Book Society between 1840 and 1870, a Tamil publication issued by the Madras Religious Tract and Book Society passed through five editions between 1832 and 1861, and in 1886, the Madras Society alone issued more than 3000 tracts in Tamil and Malayalam against intemperance".<sup>26</sup>

At the same time some missionaries expressed their opposition to the Government's policy of excise duty on liquor as well as on opium trade which are not dealt with in this contribution.

### Twentieth Century Scenario

Missionaries working in India felt the need to have a national body towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was mainly to deal with the Government on issues pertaining to their field of activities. After much sharing on the matter, a national body, the National Missionary Council (NMC) was formed in 1914 in which all the Protestant mission bodies became members. So from then on the NMC took up for discussion social issues also. Hence the Temperance issue became not of any individual missionary or a mission society but a common concern of the NMC. The fourth meeting of the NMC held at Coonoor (the Nilgris)

<sup>25</sup> Oddie, *Social Protest*, 201, citing "The Bengal Directory 1873"

<sup>26</sup> Oddie, *Social Protest*, 204-205

in November 1917 discussed the matter and decided to approach the Government to deal with the matter.<sup>27</sup>

The Temperance Movement under the aegis of the missionaries, started to wane in the 1930s. Why? The reasons could be the following:

1. The World War I combatant countries imposed sharp restrictions on the sale of alcohol and in the working hours of pubs, which in a way took care of the demands of the temperance societies.
2. Nationalist organizations took up the temperance issue more vigorously and away from the purview of Christian missionaries. In a way it became a political issue.
3. The restrictions imposed by the British Indian Government on the non-British missionaries as a result of World War I especially since 1919 could be a reason. The Government expected every non-British missionary to sign a 'Form of Undertaking' wherein the missionary had to undertake to pay all due obedience and respect to the Government and to abstain from participation in political affairs.<sup>28</sup> So the missionaries would have decided to keep away from temperance movement to show that they are 'obedient' to the Government.

## Conclusion

The Protestant missionaries' involvement in temperance movement needs to be appreciated. It was a contextual involvement. It was in line with the thinking of Jesus Christ who came to serve and not to be served, who cared for the uncared for and who created an inclusive community. Though initially the involvement of the missionaries in the

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<sup>27</sup> D. Arthur Jeyakumar, *A Channel for God's Love for a Century 1914-2014* (The History of the National Council of Churches in India), (Delhi: ISPCK, 2014): 7

<sup>28</sup> D. Arthur Jeyakumar, *Christians and the National Movement* (The Memoranda of 1919 and the National Movement with special Reference to Protestant Christians in Tamil Nadu : 1919-1939), Second edition (Bangalore : Centre for Contemporary Christianity, 2009): 179



temperance issue was looked at with suspicion, as a tool for evangelism and Christian conversion activity, very soon it came in for appreciation leading Indians of different castes and social status to get involved in abstinence propaganda. So, in a way the missionaries played a facilitating role for the Indians to get involved in social progress of their own people. The missionaries highlighted the evils of intoxicants which the Indians took up and used the same for their nationalist political cause.

What do we as present-day Christians learn from the history of Protestant missionaries' involvement in temperance issue? Do we as a Church express our stand when political parties take up the question of total prohibition? When the governments say they need money for welfare schemes and thus justify their stand on the sale of liquor, what is our perspective?



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